YS COMICS

闇のイージス 4 幻痛

原作 七月鏡一
作画 藤原芳秀

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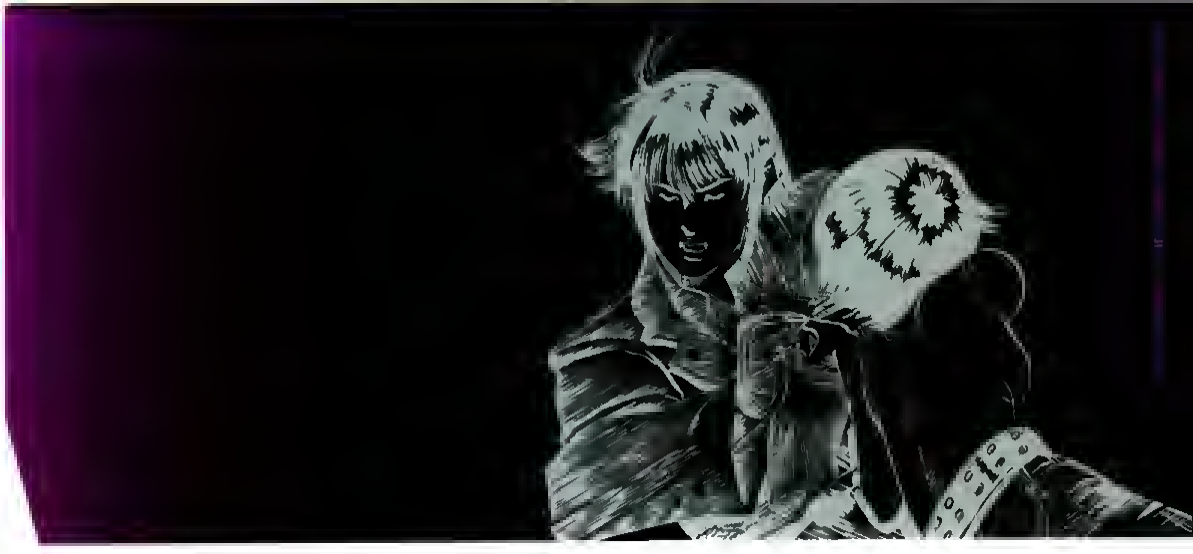
## この"痛み"が俺の証だ!

AEGIS IN THE DARK

**Defense 10 幻痛**
特人を狩って、三人のヒットマンが外務から送り込まれた。情報を聞きつけた守道順子刑事は、国人がいる精神病院跡へ向かう。そこでは国人が警官だった頃の上司・平栗とともに「特別な儀式」を行おうとしていた。

**Defense 11 禁猟区**
五人を殺して特亡中の男・田辺を特殊することになった国人。彼特人の子供は再生不良性貧血に苦しんでおり、国が一国する田辺からの骨髄移植を心待としていた。特人は田辺を病院まで連れていけるのか…!?

**Defense 12 闇の刃**
人の心の闇みにつけ込む特の特特「天特」。特良ちひろはそこで特人技術を学んだ少女である。特独に生きていた彼女の特に 特特メールがきっかけで国人事件に巻き込まれた少女が現れた。メールの主は 天特!!



今、一番おもしろい——

## YOUNG SUNDAY COMICS

■のイージス　1～4巻——七月鏡一／藤原芳秀
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**原作／七月鏡一**（左）
1968年 北海道出身 90年に少年サンデー創作大賞に入選しデビュー 代表作「ジーザス」（作画 藤原芳秀）「ARMS」（作 皆川亮二）「青空家力など 映画の企画立案 脚本なども手がける

**作画／藤原芳秀**（右）
1966年 鳥取県出身 84年に第14回小学館新人コミック大賞に入選しデビュー。代表作「義兄」（原作 松田隆智）「ジーザス」（原作 七月鏡一）「コンテ・コマ」（原作・鍋田吉郎）など。

原作/七月鏡一

STORY BY KYOICHI NANATSUKI & YOSHIHIDE FUJIWARA

作画/藤原芳秀

YS COMICS

4

# 闇のイージス

AEGIS IN THE DARK

# AEGIS IN THE DARK

KYOUICHI NANATSUKI & TOSHIHIDE FUJIWARA


| | | | |
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| Defense 28 | 幻痛 I | *Phantom Pain 1* | 5 |
| Defense 29 | 幻痛 II | *Phantom Pain 2* | 25 |
| Defense 30 | 禁獄区 I | *Sanctuary 1* | 49 |
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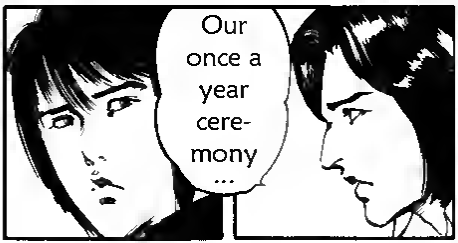
ザ
アアアア…
暁拡合病院
Defense 28
幻痛 I
Phantom Pain 1
Tate ... you here already?

Kai
...
ザアア…
Defense:28
幻痛 1
Phantom Pain 1

ガァ
カ…

3

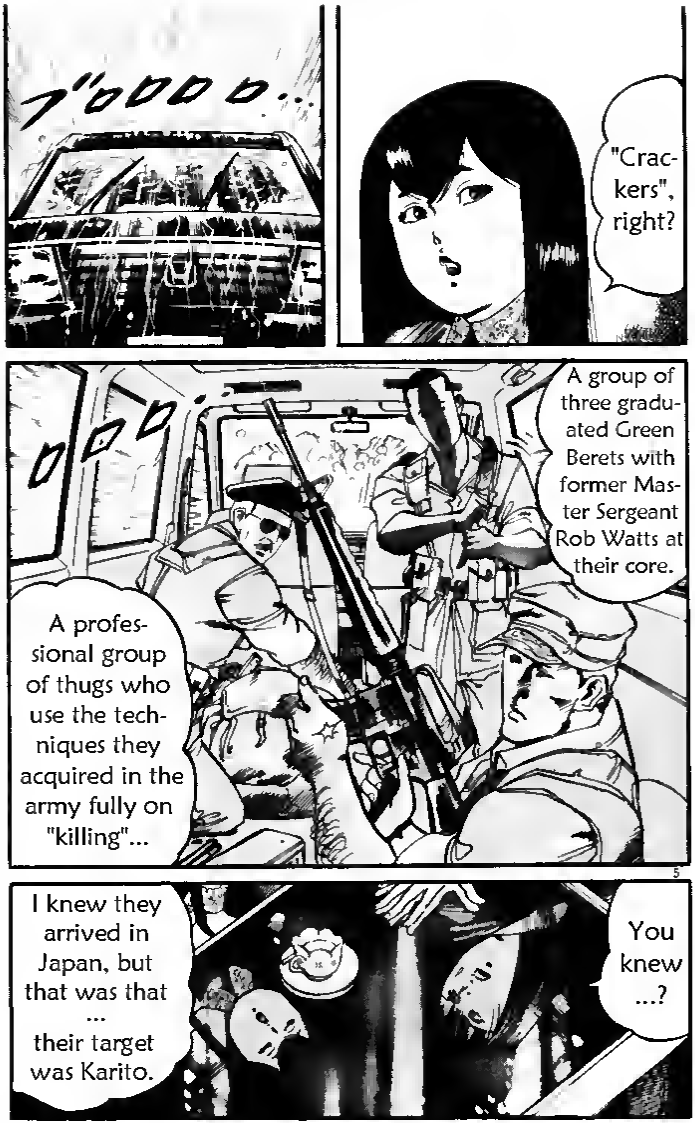

Our once a year cere-mony ...

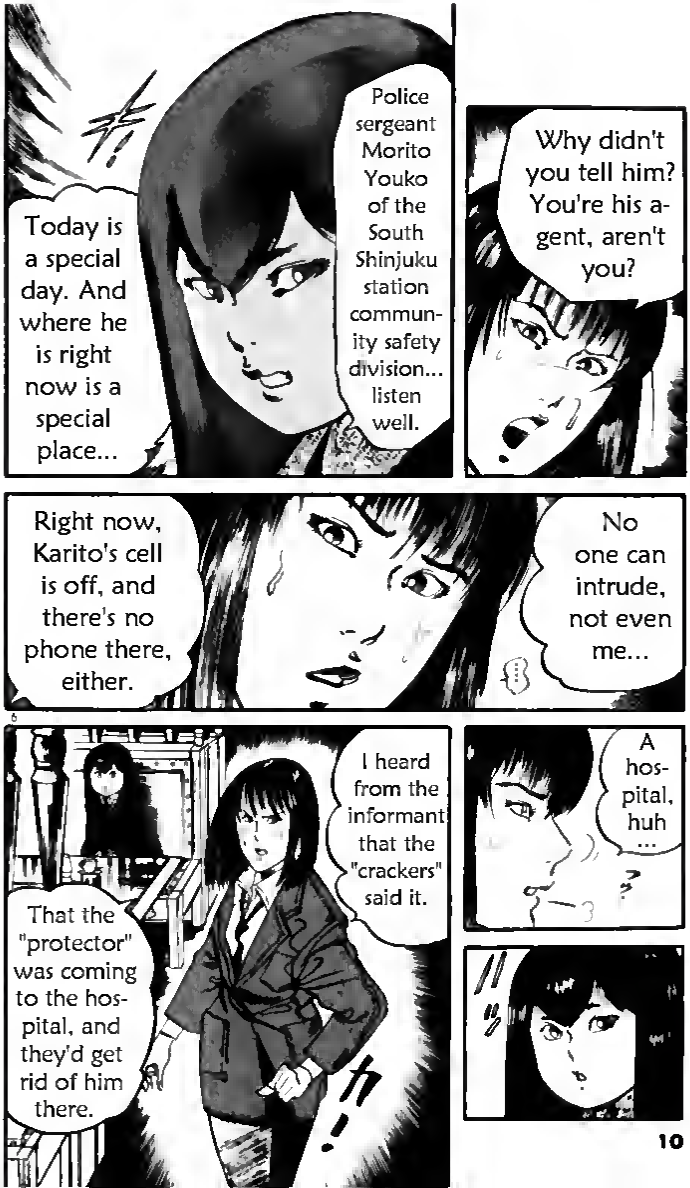
Let's start when it's time.

ガァァァ

ガァァ

No.
Tell me his whereabouts and fast. No riddles.
About two months ago, a South American organization tried to get rid of a man who stole their drug money, and failed to capture him.
That's because the man hired Aegis, the "protector".
You go by Anna, right? Listen up!
They're not ordinary hitmen. All three are foreigners, professional fighters with army experience!
That the organization sent hitmen against Aegis.
And today, an informant heard something and came forth.


"Crackers", right?
A group of three graduated Green Berets with former Master Sergeant Rob Watts at their core.
A professional group of thugs who use the techniques they acquired in the army fully on "killing"...
I knew they arrived in Japan, but that was that ... their target was Karito.
You knew ...?

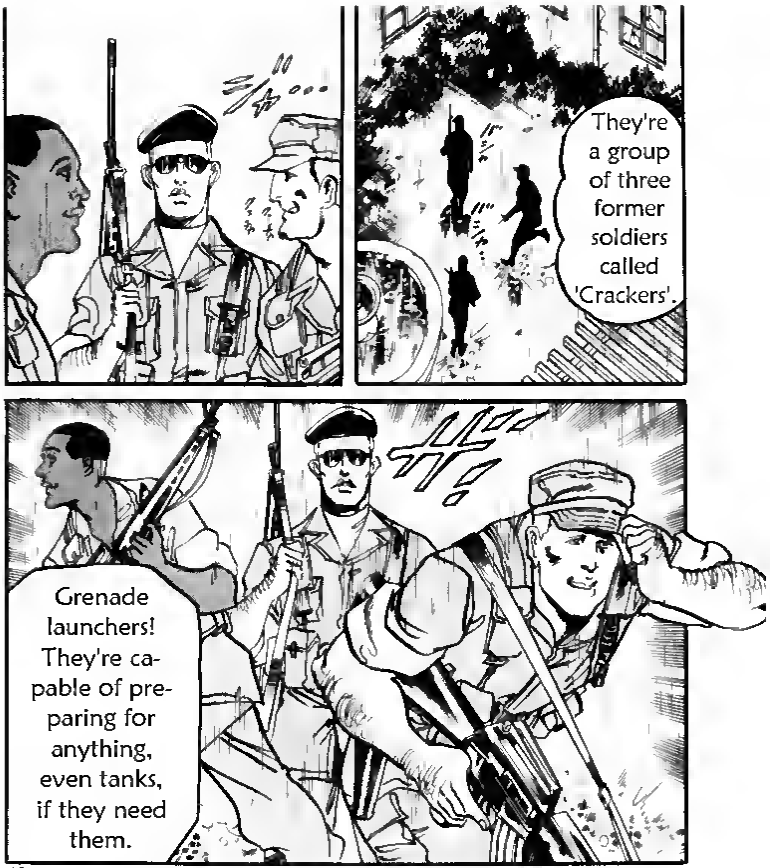

Police sergeant Morito Youko of the South Shinjuku station community safety division... listen well.
Today is a special day. And where he is right now is a special place...
Why didn't you tell him? You're his agent, aren't you?
No one can intrude, not even me...
Right now, Karito's cell is off, and there's no phone there, either.
6
I heard from the informant that the "crackers" said it.
That the "protector" was coming to the hospital, and they'd get rid of him there.
A hospital, huh ...

I loathe you.
Wait !!
I'll tell you the location... but there's just one thing I want you to remember.
Shall we start ...?
Sure

チャ!
St-
op
...
!!

Don't fuck with me!
I don't know what sort of reason you have, but... I won't let you do that right before my eyes!
Don't intrude, Morito Youko.
What the hell are you two doing?! Drop your guns!
ニィィィィ…
ニィィ
ガ!!

Listen up, "protector"! Hitmen have been sent after you...


They're a group of three former soldiers called 'Crackers'.
Grenade launchers! They're capable of preparing for anything, even tanks, if they need them.

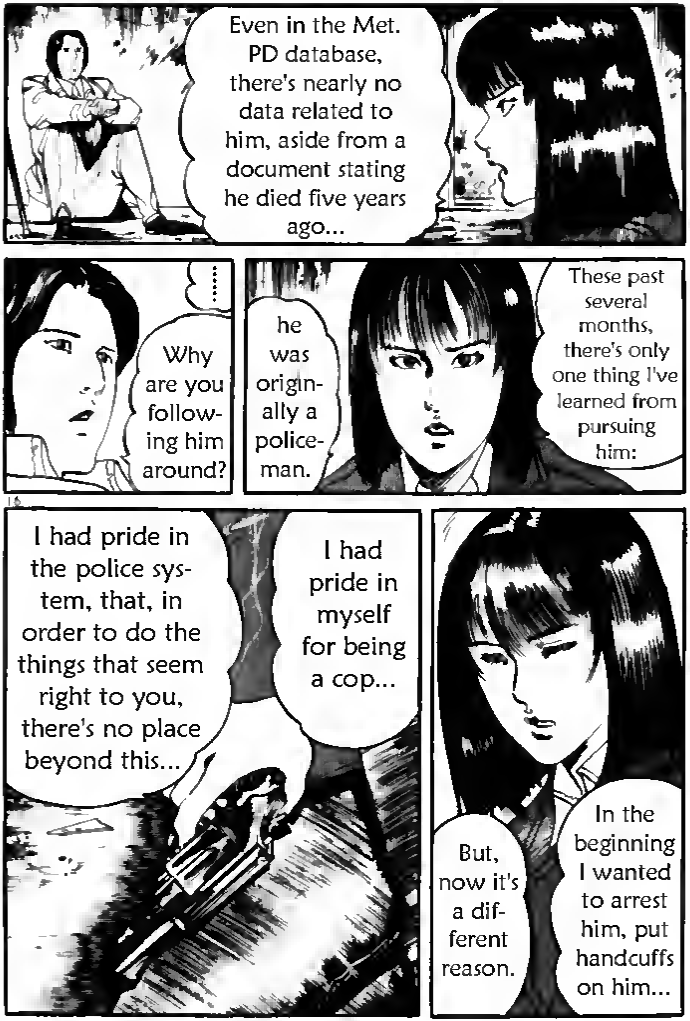
My car is outside!
Get away from here immediately!

You could get in here because they thought it'd be easier to get rid of us together inside.
If they're experienced army, there is likely no path of retreat any more.
You serious ?!
Do you plan to take them on with your artificial arm, 'protector'?!
Kai, I'm entrusting this place to you.
ガチャリ...
Understood; be careful.
Morito Youko-kun of the south Shinjuku station, right... how about having a seat?

Please tell me... who that man is!
.....
Senior superintendent Kai of the National Police Agency's military police division... I've seen you a few times.
Do you know who I am?

As the "protector" of the underground society ...
As long as they pay money, then, even if the client is a criminal, he'll guard them.
Tate Karito ...

It's said that, up to now, he's never failed a client.
his arm is really top-notch.
15
Therefore ...
he's called the "Shield of Aegis".


Even in the Met. PD database, there's nearly no data related to him, aside from a document stating he died five years ago...
Why are you following him around?
he was originally a policeman.
These past several months, there's only one thing I've learned from pursuing him:
I had pride in the police system, that, in order to do the things that seem right to you, there's no place beyond this...
I had pride in myself for being a cop...
But, now it's a different reason.
In the beginning I wanted to arrest him, put handcuffs on him...

On the other hand, although that man puts himself in the vicinity of criminals, he doesn't resemble any kind of criminal I know!
But these past several months, I've witnessed various things.
There was a police bureaucrat who hushed up his son's crimes. My superior was influenced by a cult organization within the police and diverted confiscated goods into local channels.

Kuh... incendiary hand grenades!

That man's eyes ...
are the eyes of a person who has seen
unbelievable hell, and come crawling up from it.

You're already ...
walking halfway into his hell, it seems ...

And... you have the same eyes, too ...
senior superintendent Kai.

"Today is a special day and this place is a special place": the words of his agent.
You know what that means, don't you?

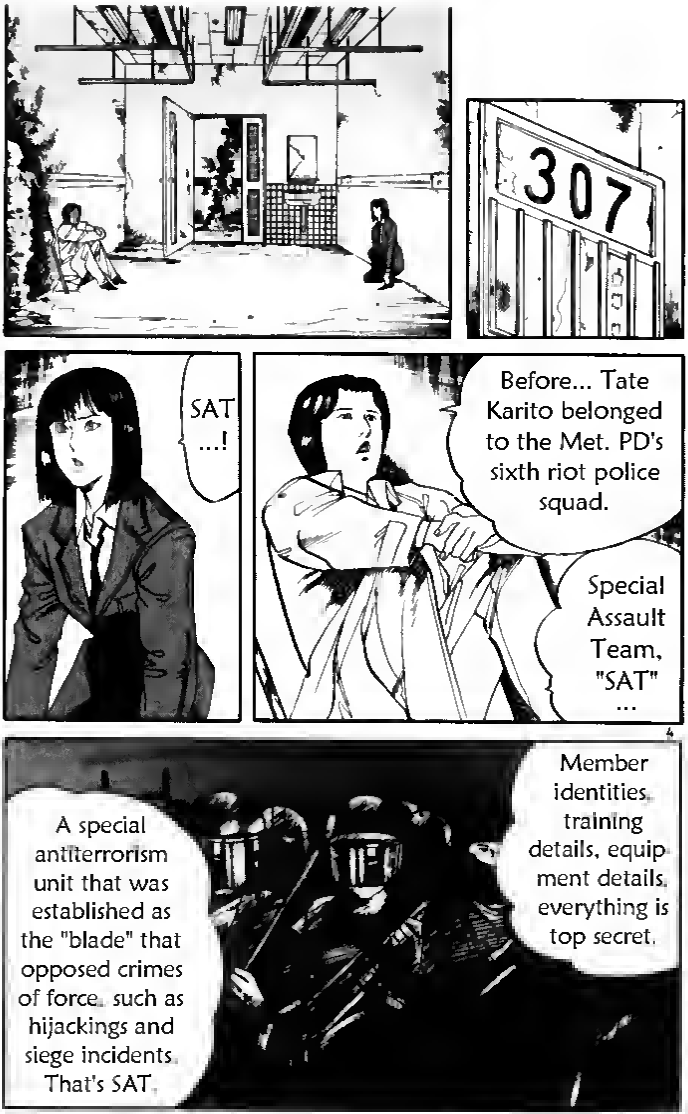
That debilitating "pain" runs through your artificial right arm, which cannot feel anything.
I heard some interesting information, Shield of Aegis!
That you can't fight with a sea of fire before you.
Five years ago today! In this sickroom in this hospital ...
Karito lost his wife and son, along with his right arm
Farewell.

For the day you waged war to be today, and for the place to be here...
did you select them knowing their significance ...
Do you know the significance of the "pain" in my arm?
I will oppose you
with all my power.

幻痛II
Phantom Pain 2
Five years ago today, in this sick-room in this hos-pital...
Karito lost his wife and son, along with his right arm!

Defense.29
幻痛Ⅱ
—Phantom Pain 2—
ボオオ!

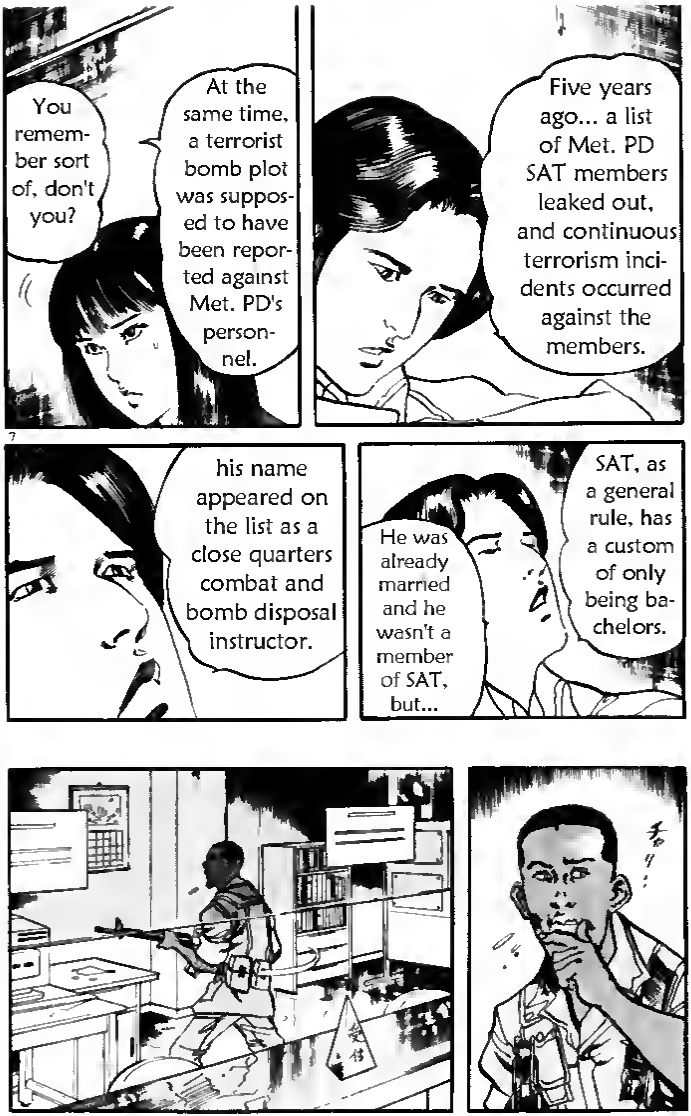
ウオオオオ
ドン
3
ガガガガ
Hen-
ry?!


307
SAT ...!
Before... Tate Karito belonged to the Met. PD's sixth riot police squad.
Special Assault Team, "SAT" ...
A special antiterrorism unit that was established as the "blade" that opposed crimes of force, such as hijackings and siege incidents. That's SAT.
Member identities, training details, equipment details, everything is top secret.

Fool, taking refuge in a dead end!
There aren't even any windows to sneak out; I inspected it thoroughly, so I should know!

.....?
Not here ...?

In SAT, he was the best bomb disposal expert, and...
close quarters combat expert. That's the man known as Tate Karito...


You remember sort of, don't you?
At the same time, a terrorist bomb plot was supposed to have been reported against Met. PD's personnel.
Five years ago... a list of Met. PD SAT members leaked out, and continuous terrorism incidents occurred against the members.
7
his name appeared on the list as a close quarters combat and bomb disposal instructor.
He was already married and he wasn't a member of SAT, but...
SAT, as a general rule, has a custom of only being bachelors.

What ...?!
A fire extingu-isher... damn!
Where are you?! Come out! I know you're there!

The day that Tate's young son Masato, who was turning four, was hospitalized for a heart operation, the hospital was attacked... here...
Who was the terrorist? What was his purpose in attacking the families of SAT? We still don't know.
He's not a white collar criminal to begin with.
He's only called this because of the preference he has for the accessory he wears.

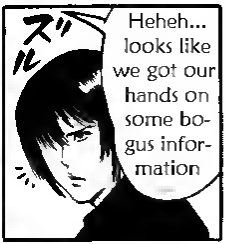
307
暁総合病院
"But-ter-fly" ...

After he killed one doctor and two nurses ...
he shot and killed Tate's wife who was nursing her son in the hospital room.
At the time that "Butterfly" departed he left a parting gift.

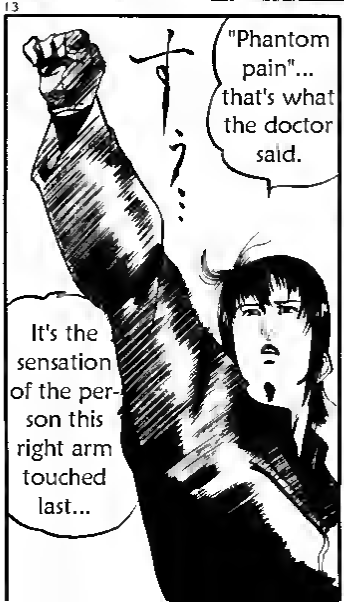
Boy, you love your papa, don't you?
He set a time bomb on the child's body ...
.....

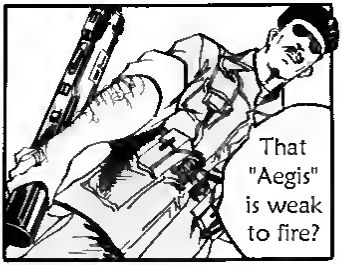
ズル..

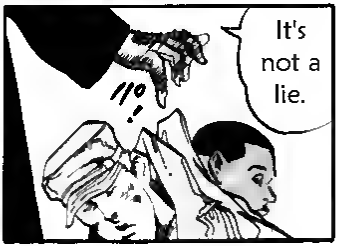
ズル.
ズル.

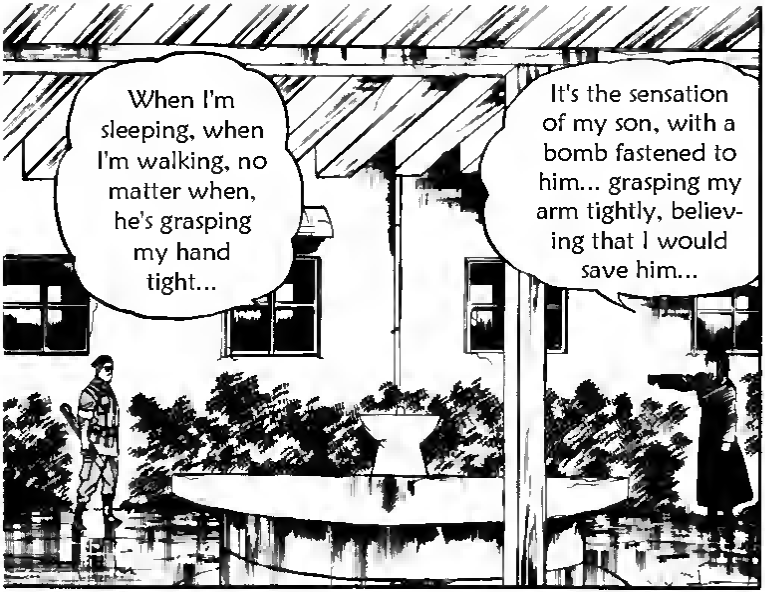

ズル
Heheh... looks like we got our hands on some bogus information

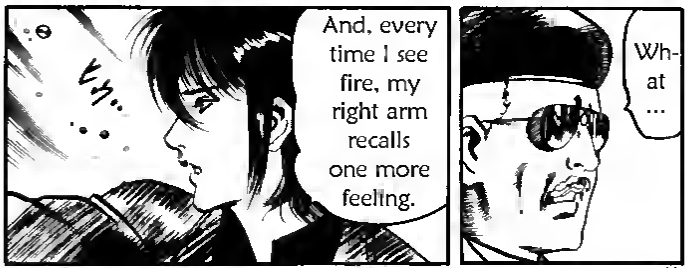
13


"Phantom pain"... that's what the doctor said.
It's the sensation of the person this right arm touched last...


That "Aegis" is weak to fire?


It's not a lie.

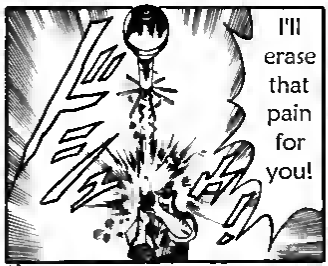

When I'm sleeping, when I'm walking, no matter when, he's grasping my hand tight...
It's the sensation of my son, with a bomb fastened to him... grasping my arm tightly, believing that I would save him...


And, every time I see fire, my right arm recalls one more feeling.
Wh-at ...

Like a broken record, it re-plays over and over... and, naturally, now!
The pain from the moment it was blown off at the same time as my son!

Aegis!

Be grate-ful...


I'll erase that pain for you!

Pass.

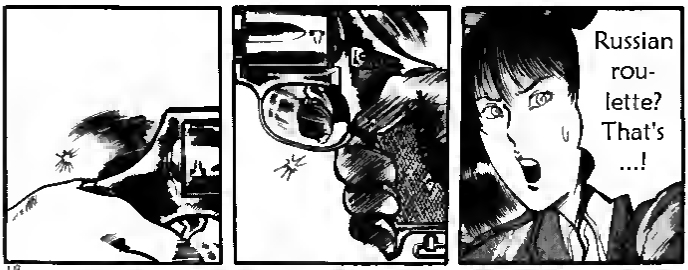
That I can stand like this ...
is be-cause my anger is winning even more than my pain.

This "pain" is my proof!

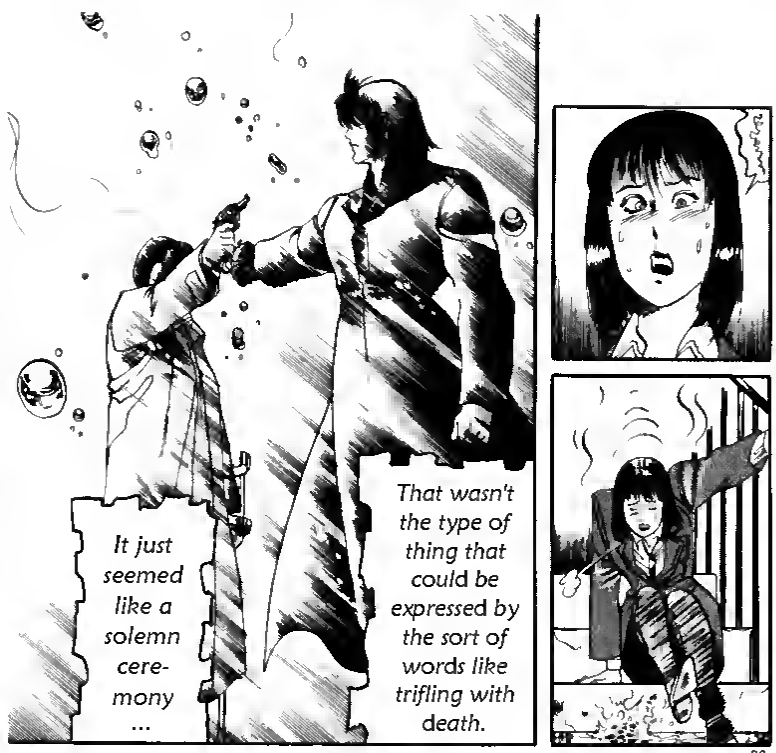
can't be ...!
Th-is...
I couldn't protect the person I most wanted to protect ...
That pain keeps me alive ...

In order to follow the whereabouts of the escaped terrorist and get "revenge" ...
So is that why you became the "protector" of the illegal world?
If I, who was in the Community Safety first division, had opposed making you a decoy... we might've been able to avoid tragedy.
Ceremony?
Let's begin... the ceremony.
ギャラララララ!

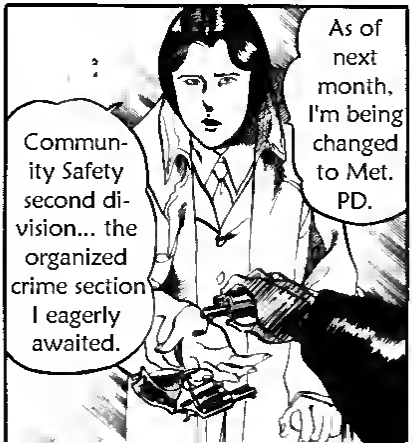
チャ
!!


Russian roulette? That's ...!

they only made the noise of the hammers dropping resound ...
As if it was perhaps planned from the beginning by the two New Nambus..


It just seemed like a solemn ceremony ...
That wasn't the type of thing that could be expressed by the sort of words like trifling with death.




Community Safety second division... the organized crime section I eagerly awaited.
As of next month, I'm being changed to Met. PD.

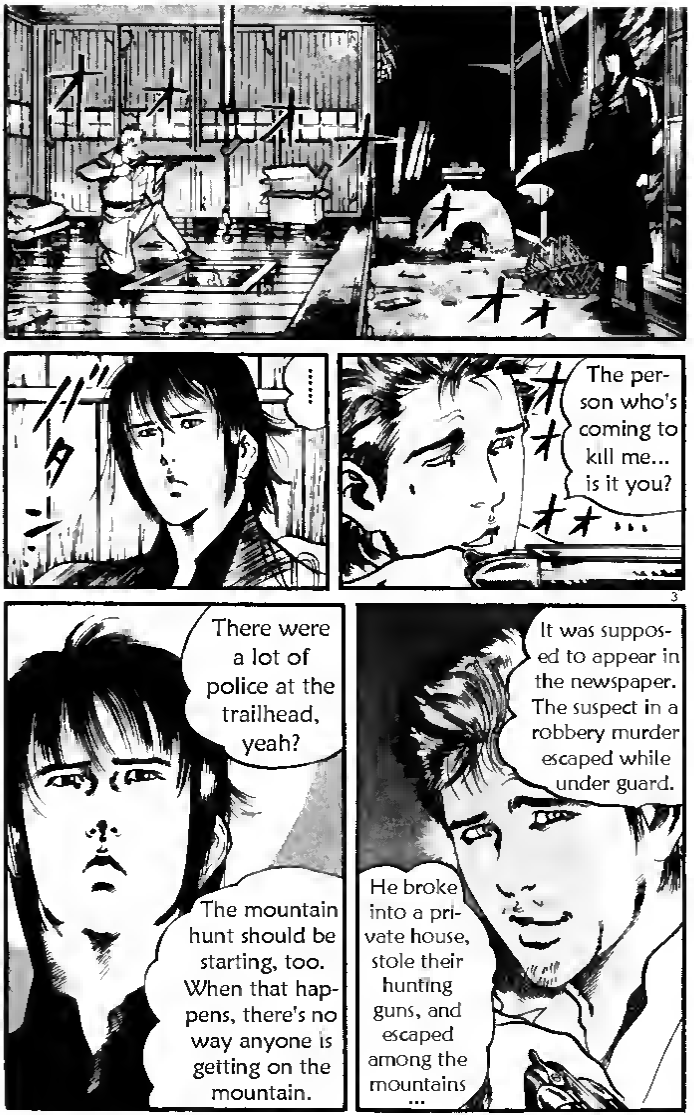
So, they're telling us to live one year again ...

My hell is there.
And your hell is within the darkness...
Don't die, Karito ...
My little sister wouldn't want that either.
Another time ...
brother-in-law ...

Aegis
...
in the
dark
...!
So
...
So that's
your way
of life...

Shin-shuu ... Ma-ouga-dane
Coming ...
Defense.30
禁猟区 I
—Sanctuary 1—
in order to kill me ...
He's coming along ...

# Defense.30
# 禁猟区 I
## Sanctuary 1


……
The person who's coming to kill me... is it you?
3
There were a lot of police at the trailhead, yeah?
The mountain hunt should be starting, too. When that happens, there's no way anyone is getting on the mountain.
It was supposed to appear in the newspaper. The suspect in a robbery murder escaped while under guard.
He broke into a private house, stole their hunting guns, and escaped among the mountains ...

The scent of a "hunter"!
Besides... there's a kind of scent emitting from you that I know well...
Take everything out of your bag, and put these on yourself.
ガシャン
How much did the "clan" say they'd pay you if you found where I was?
Corned beef, mineral water, vitamins... considering your lightweight clothes, you know your hiking, dontcha?
バラバラ

How many people have you killed so far?
It's not the scent of less than three.
killed five ...
I've ...
Then everything would be over; even if I went to prison, it would've been okay ...
I should've finished with the fourth... that shitlike bastard of the fourth ...

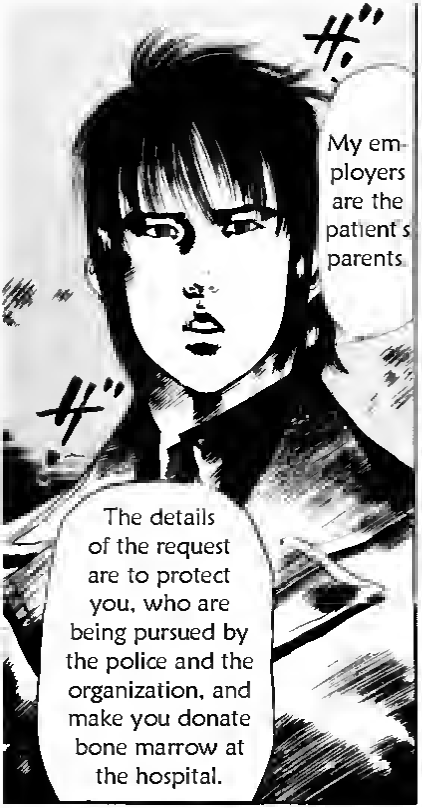
Did you escape the escort car because of that casualty?
But, I went and killed the fifth... it was unexpected ...
Did you climb this mountain to die, Tanabe Akira?
because of that fifth casualty?
Did you flee, knowing you'd be killed after you sold information on the "clan" over to the prosecutor and got out ...
Come out, Tanabe!
We know you're in there!
Bastard ...

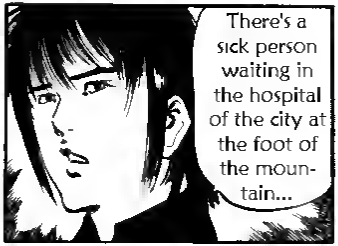
オオオオ
You came out, Tanabe!
ガラ
Even though they'll kill me, there's no way they'd use the likes of you!
Hmm... you bastards, huh... got impatient, so you're acting on your own, eh?
7
Don't move! The recon you sent will die!
Sorry, but I have no intention of being killed by the likes of you!
Shut up!
If we kill you here, then everything is over!

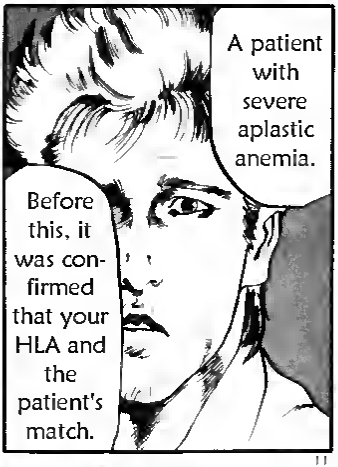
Recon? The hell are you talking about?
Wh-at?
Who... the hell are you ...?
Why did you come here ...?
I'm the "pro-tector", Tate Karito ...

It can't be!

Are you the "Shield of Aegis" ...?!
Tate, you say?
Protector, you say?
Why did you protect me?
I didn't the hell commission you!
I've heard of you... the Shield of Aegis.
The protector who will protect any sort of person, as long as you pile up the money.


My employers are the patient's parents.
The details of the request are to protect you, who are being pursued by the police and the organization, and make you donate bone marrow at the hospital.




TL
HLA stands for "human leukocyte antigen"

If your bone marrow can't be transplanted, that patient will die in several months...
The chance of finding a donor whose HLA matches is terribly low.
It's useless...! Both of us will be hunted and die on this mountain.
The person coming after me from here on out is a professional manhunter!
You're telling me, a murderer, to save someone?
That's where you fucked up...
Manhunter ...?

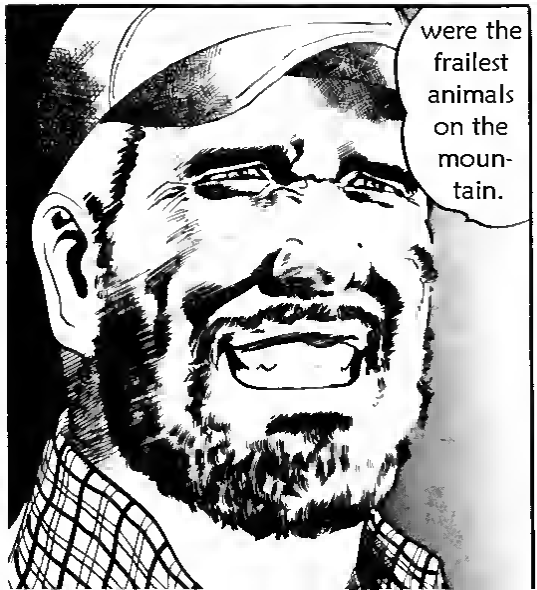
ガオン
ガオン
ガオン
ガオン
ガオン
ガオン
13

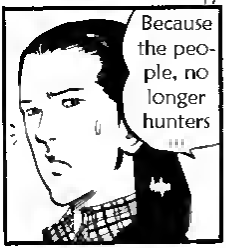
Your duty should've been to determine Tanabe's whereabouts and observe.
P-please forgive us, Unno-san!

ヒイイイイッ
I'll give you a chance.
Run away from here while I smoke one cigarette.
Unno-san... is that okay?
Don't be in such a rush.
Do you know? About the olden days, thousands of years ago...
It's a nice morning, isn't it?

But, eventually, when farming started...
ギ…
the need to hunt disappeared... and everyone descended from the mountains.
People all lived on the mountains. They were all hunters.
Why do you think that is?
And they never came back to the mountains again.

ガ゛ガ゛ガ゛ガ゛


were the frailest animals on the mountain.


Because the people, no longer hunters

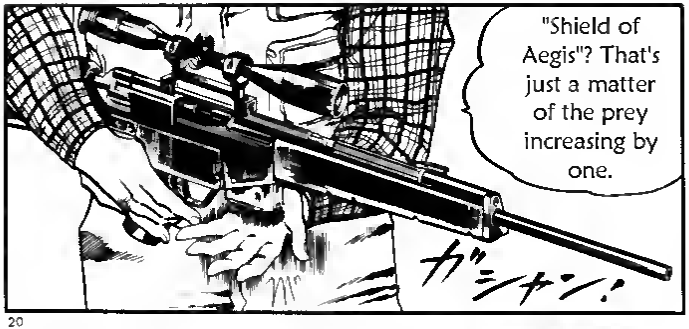
ザッ
ハア
ハア
ガシ

ウォルルルオーン

オオオ

オオ〜ン

ザッ

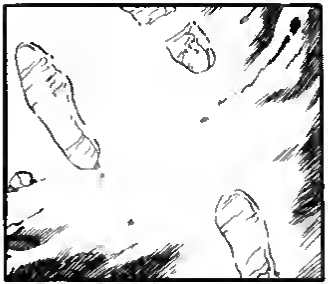

"Shield of Aegis"? That's just a matter of the prey increasing by one.
ガシャン!

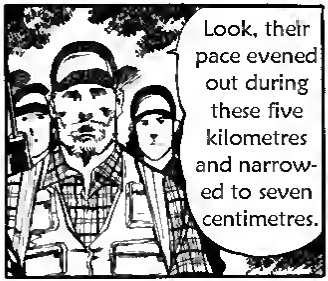
20

I'll show you the animal called the "man-hunter"!

Tanabe Akira...
the man who killed my daughter!

# Defense.31
# 禁猟区 Ⅱ
## ——Sanctuary 2——




Look, their pace evened out during these five kilometres and narrowed to seven centimetres.

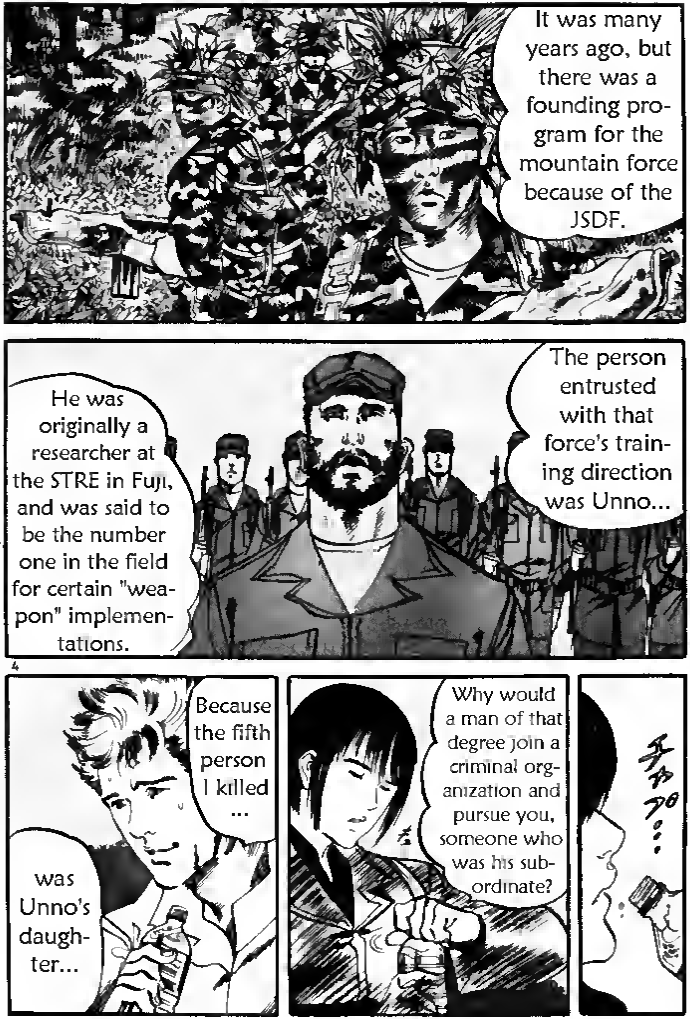
2

If we go even one more hour, they'll be "in range", Neo.
フッフッフ

According to my theory, they won't take even a ten minute rest per hour.
The degree of their fatigue should be intense.

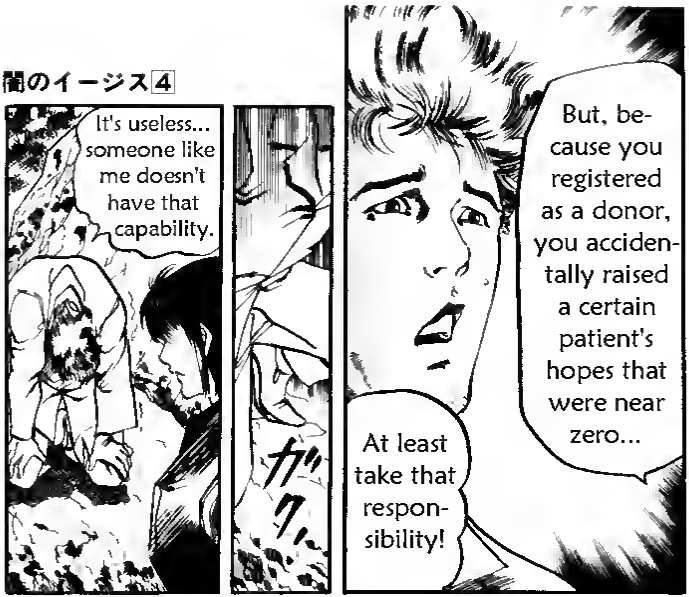
Tanabe... you said the man coming after us is a "man-hunter"?

It's a nick-name; he's Unno Shirou. He was my su-perior officer from when I was in the JSDF.


It was many years ago, but there was a founding program for the mountain force because of the JSDF.
The person entrusted with that force's training direction was Unno...
He was originally a researcher at the STRE in Fuji, and was said to be the number one in the field for certain "weapon" implementations.
STRE: Special Tactics Research Establishment
4
Because the fifth person I killed ...
was Unno's daughter...
Why would a man of that degree join a criminal organization and pursue you, someone who was his subordinate?
ﾁｬﾘﾝ!!

ｷﾝ!
I'm the worst criminal ...
I registered at the bone marrow bank, because the lawyer advised it would become material for "having intent to rehab".
It wasn't really for other people or anything!
Did you seclude yourself among these mountains in order to take Unno's revenge upon yourself and accept it?
5
It's my life ...
I can use it as I like.

Sorry, but the shells are here.
!
BLAM!
After my mission is fulfilled, how you handle your own life has nothing to do with me.


It's useless... someone like me doesn't have that capability.
ガク
But, because you registered as a donor, you accidentally raised a certain patient's hopes that were near zero...
At least take that responsibility!

What's wrong?
.....

The birds aren't chirping ...

They're here ...

ｶﾞｯｶﾞｯ!

ｲｯｲｯｲｯｲｯ

What are these dogs?
What did you say?!
They're Unno's ... "weapon" ...
They train as trump cards in guerilla warfare ...
and they're only trained in man-hunting ...

They're military combat dogs!

Military combat dogs ...
If you're worried, even though their training was only to be able to kill us soundlessly, they won't come at us.
That bastard Unno... he orders them to torment over and over, then kill.

As a rule, when it comes to hunting...
no living creatures display as excellent a combination as animals in the dog family.
It's unfortunate; if I hadn't thrown the shotgun away, we'd have had a chance to survive.
12
If they're really war dogs, that sort of thing isn't useful.
Lastly, they pull you to the ground and bite your windpipe! That's how dogs hunt!
Rump, shoulder, thigh... they weaken their prey through hit and run attacks, then chase them for kilometers.

Hey, what're you doing?!
Jump! Jump over to the other side of that cliff!
That's ... nuts!

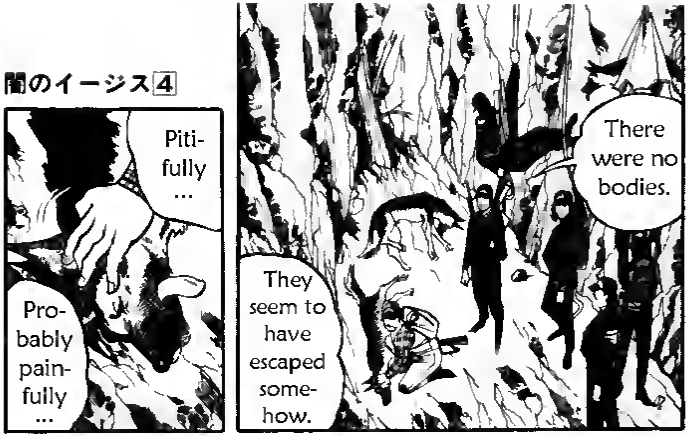
Com-
mence
the
battle!
Damn!
They're
coming!
Now!
Jump!

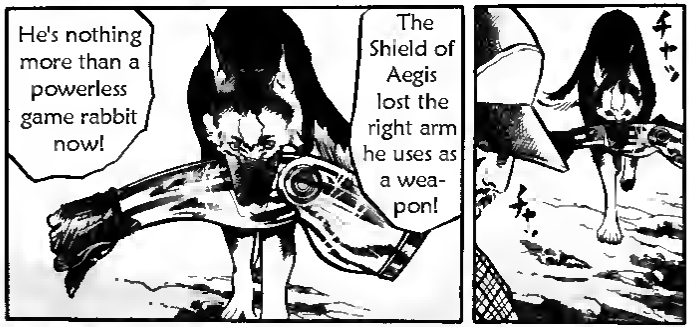
ガブッ!
ギャアアア
ガブ
ガブ
t.6

When I signal, kick the cliff with all your strength and jump!
Hold onto my shoulder ...

Keh... these dogs are...?
Wh-what did you say?!
I'm taking off my "right arm".

あ
あ
あ
ラ

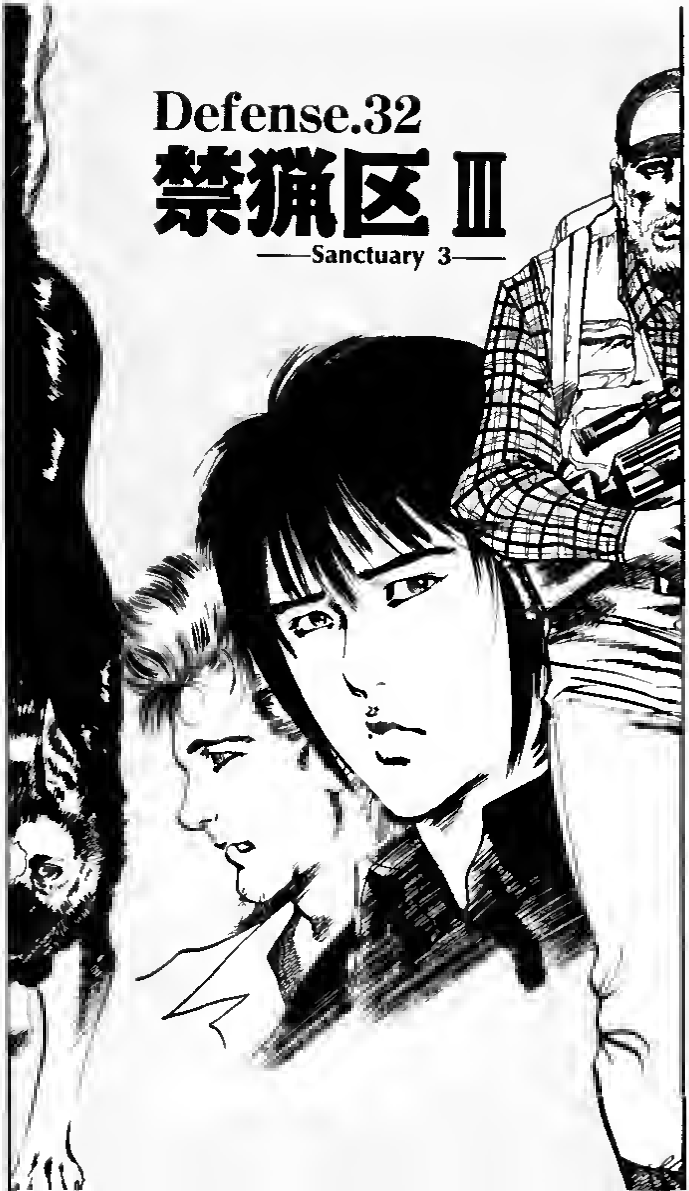

There were no bodies.
They seem to have escaped somehow.
Pitifully ...
Probably painfully ...


He's nothing more than a powerless game rabbit now!
The Shield of Aegis lost the right arm he uses as a weapon!
チャッ
ﾁｬ

Hunt! Hunt! Hunt! Hunt and hunt and hunt and track them down...
make them tremble with powerlessness and, finally, kill!

Look, seems like a ghost town... let's rest.
"H"...
I guess that depends on you ...
Unno's daughter whom I killed... she had a child inside her.
It was my kid ...
Do you think a person like me has the ability to save someone?

# Defense.32
# 禁猟区 Ⅲ
## ——Sanctuary 3——

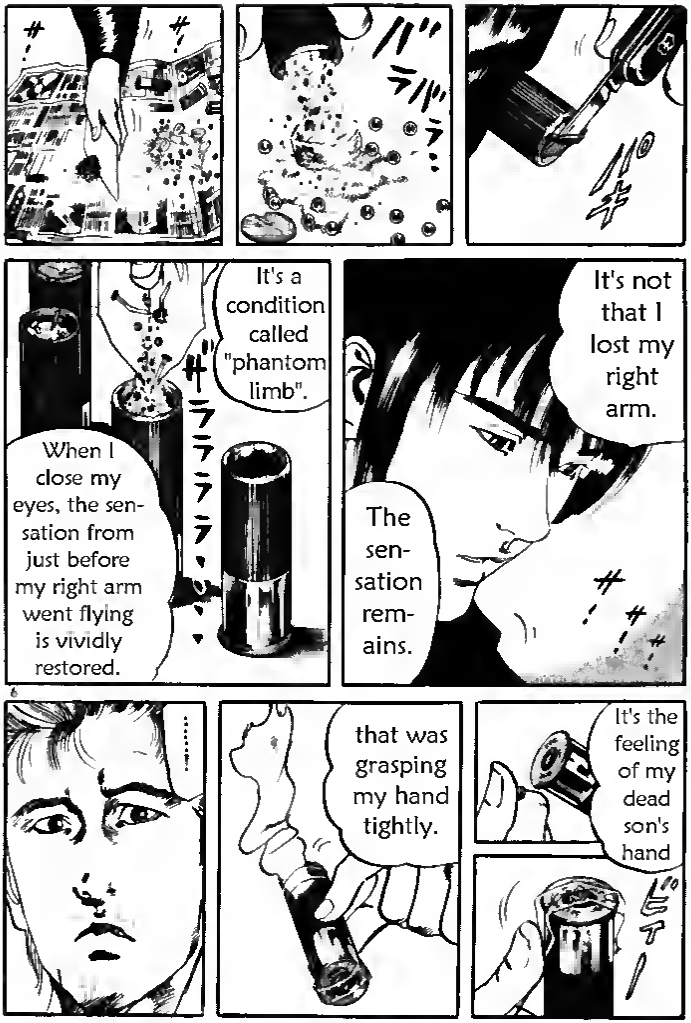


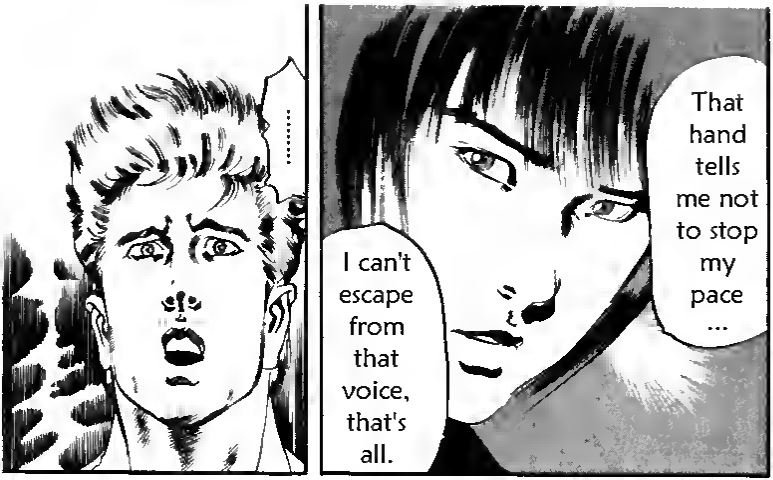
I didn't sympathize or contemplate.
The man from the "clan" was trying to double-cross me.
I was completely scared.
I heard something behind me... I pulled the trigger reflexively.

Akira ...!
Kyou-ko...
I didn't kill five people... more accurately, it may have been six...
She stopped breathing, less than two months after I'd been arrested...
and that was when I found out that she was carrying my child

And the "manhunter" pursuing you, Unno Shirou, is that woman's father?
I was his subordinate. I know that he'll definitely come along to kill me.
So they took refuge in a ghost town
We're waiting for the night. Eat your meals in advance
Yes sir!
Yes sir!

In order to survive, we need a weapon...
What do you plan to do with shotgun shells?
We don't have a gun.
If it's just you, can't you escape?
Unlike me, your leg isn't hurt...
Your much-vaunted artificial arm is gone.
Your wea-pon!


It's not that I lost my right arm.
The sensation remains.
It's a condition called "phantom limb".
When I close my eyes, the sensation from just before my right arm went flying is vividly restored.
.....
that was grasping my hand tightly.
It's the feeling of my dead son's hand


.....
That hand tells me not to stop my pace ...
I can't escape from that voice, that's all.

ガラ

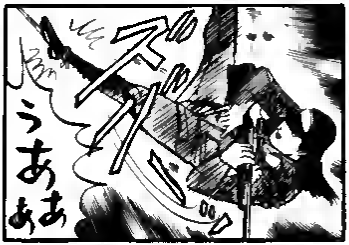
Please tell me what on earth I should do.

The sun has set ...
Hunt!

Not here ...
even though the dogs are saying their scent is here...
It's his shirt ...

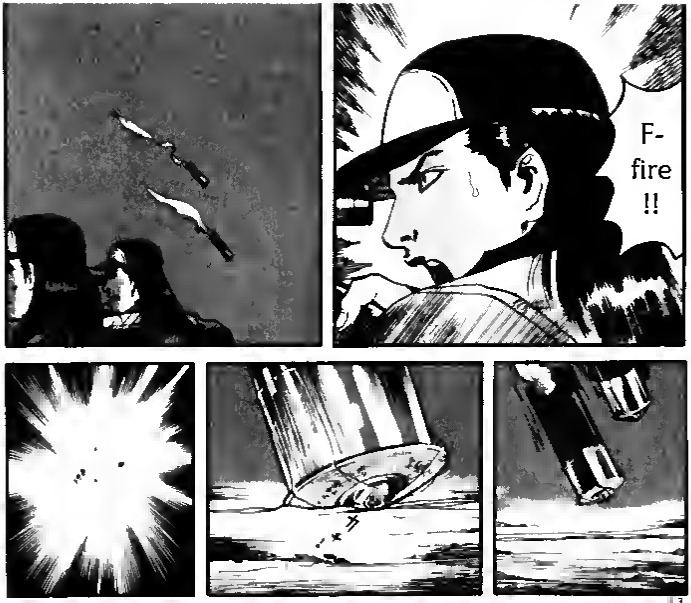
ドガア!

Ch! Getting caught in a simple trap!


うあああ

It seems they've found the scent again!

12


F-
fire
!!

う…
あ

チッ
チャン
チッ
Leave from here.
I reduced the gun-powder ahead of time, so you won't die.
ハハハハ
チッ
チッ
さ
So, the pack's leader ...!
14
ガ!

A trained dog immediately learns human "weapons".
A person doesn't have the strength to stop a dog's direct attack... if there's a chance of winning, it's just the one.
There's only the instant of the jump attack into which the dog pours every nerve and all of its physical strength!

……
16

ぐぐぐ
ヨタ
ヨタ

Neo
...
There, there... you fought well...

I was the worst ... without thinking about my family, I just spent all my time doing research...
and I couldn't protect my only daughter.

Neo.
a man like this.
Even so, you guys followed...
ドゥン
He's not a game rabbit.
チャ!
This is no longer "hunting".

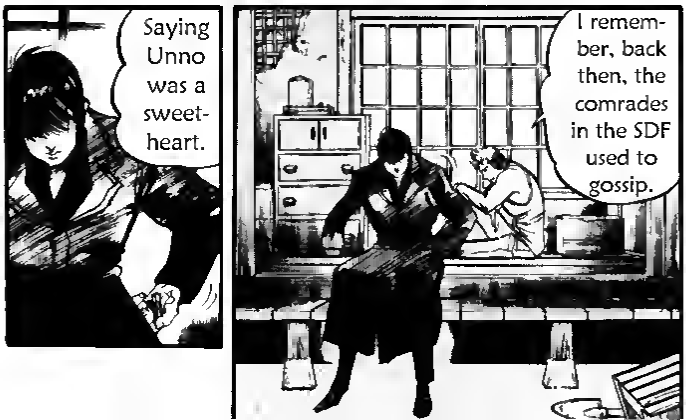
A blood-stained carni-vore!
He's also a hun-ter!
There's no need for two hunters on one hunting ground!
It's a field of "conflict" where either he or I will die!

# Defense.33
# 禁猟区 Ⅳ
## ——Sanctuary 4——

Hurts ... it hurts.
The blood's stopped; as far as I can see, it's not much of a wound
Don't fuck aro-und!
2
We're starting the final stage a second time.
If you want to go, go by your-self!
People who can move, pick up your guns.

Beyond 'former SDF', I don't know much about you, so what happened to your attitude after entering the mountain?
I understand. What you want to do isn't getting revenge for your daughter.
You sold yourself to the "clan" who wanted to bump Tanabe off, only saying "he's the enemy", didn't you?
You should go as far as to dogeza before the boss.
TL: 'dogeza' is the most formal bow
3
Among the Inuit of the Arctic Circle, if a sled dog disobeys...
what do you think the musher does?

……
We're going, you hounds!
Hurry up and start your preparations!

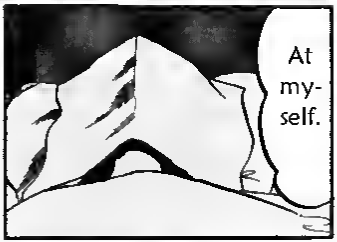

Saying Unno was a sweetheart.
I remember, back then, the comrades in the SDF used to gossip.

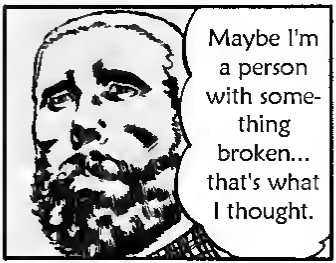
I thought he was like a real father...
He's the only one qualified to punish me, the one who killed Kyouko... because I thought that...
Even when I messed up and got discharged.
Huh...
But, he was the only person from the SDF who appreciated me, someone who's useless no matter what he does.
No.
Do you think that way now?
If you're saying someone needs even a garbage life like mine...
I want to try and survive for that purpose.

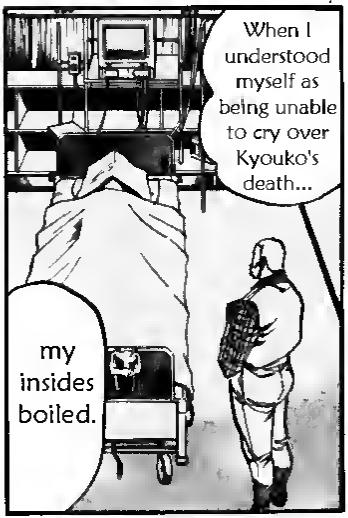
If Neo was the name of that dog...
You're the one who killed Neo?

Although I couldn't even cry when my daughter died...
When Neo died, I shed tears.

ギュ…


At myself.

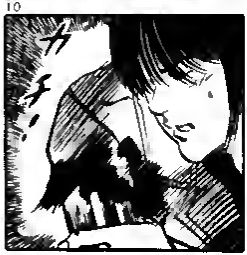

Maybe I'm a person with something broken... that's what I thought.

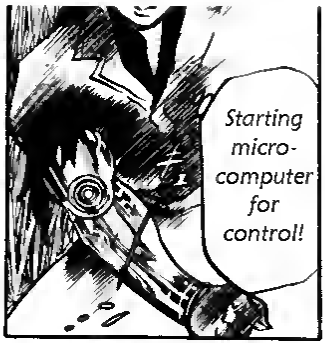

When I understood myself as being unable to cry over Kyouko's death...
my insides boiled.

To fulfill the life of I, who had done nothing but train over and over again as a man-hunter ...
I wanted a "hunting ground"!
I came this far pursuing Tanabe ...
because I thought wouldn't I be able to discover the emotions that I myself had lost sight of.
But, I finally understand.
What I wanted was an entirely different thing...
A hunting ground.

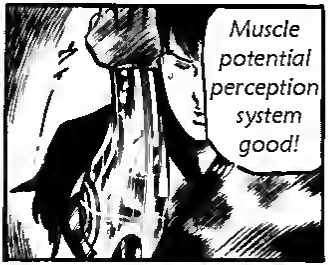
No handicaps, 'protector'; pick it up.
ガッシャ!

Now come back, "pro-tector"!




Starting micro-computer for control!

Rem-aining battery amount good!


Muscle potential perception system good!

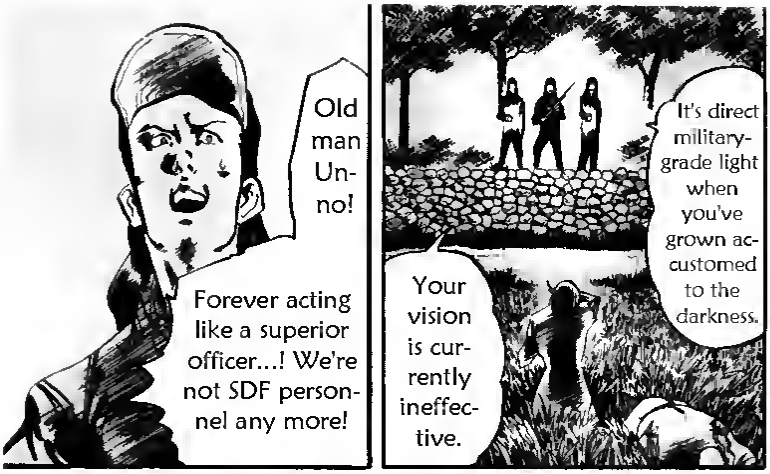
To hunt a similar hunter.
You know what the best "hunt" for a hunter is?
Even I realize!
You're a hunter too!
A hunter!!

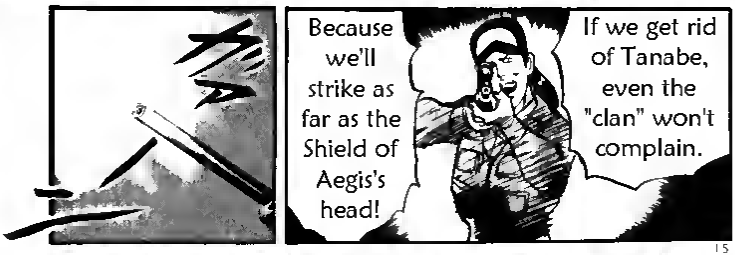
Savour it to your heart's content!
This most primitive of pleasures!

13

Listen, hounds!
Don't get involved! This is my prey.

14


Old man Un-no!
Forever acting like a superior officer...! We're not SDF personnel any more!
It's direct military-grade light when you've grown accustomed to the darkness.
Your vision is currently ineffective.

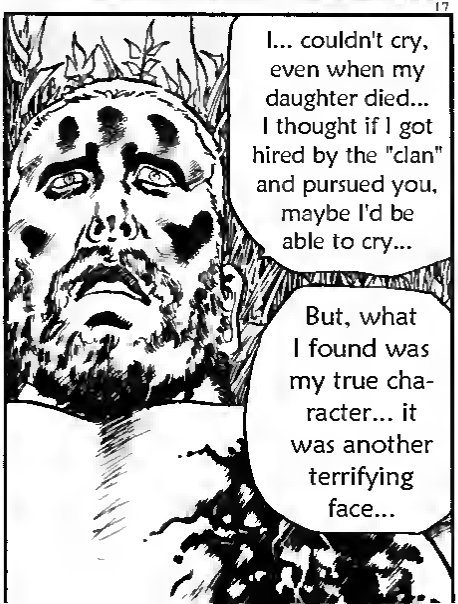

Because we'll strike as far as the Shield of Aegis's head!
If we get rid of Tanabe, even the "clan" won't complain.

What I'm beating with this fist...
You think I'm still seeing the bullets with my eyes?
is the thirst for blood you're all eman-ating!

I thought I wanted to be like you...
I respected you ...!

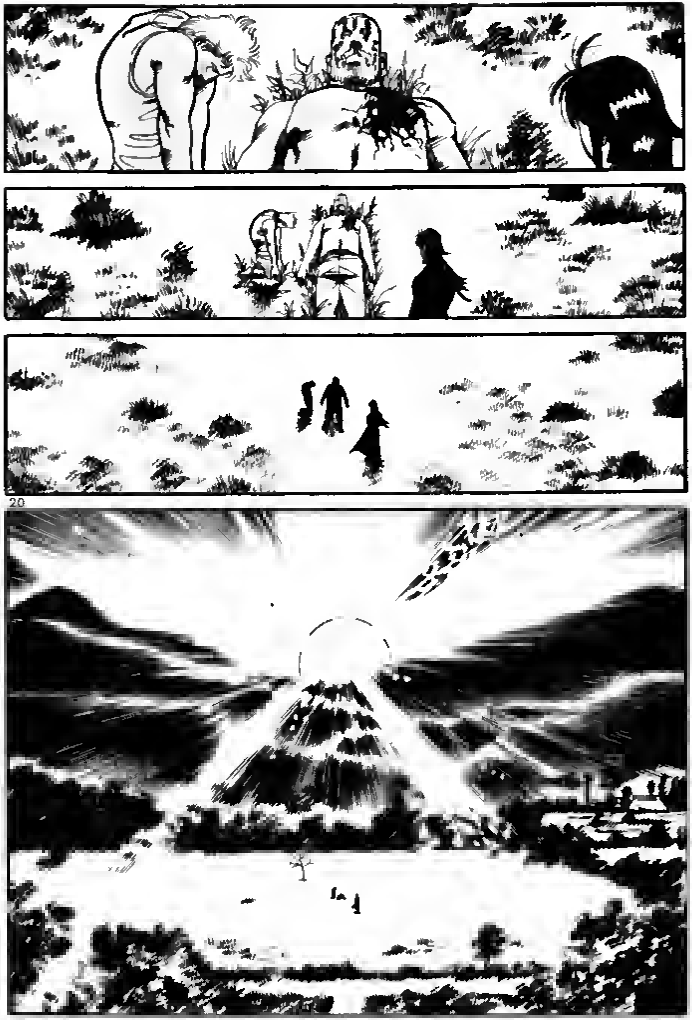
I intended to be killed by you...

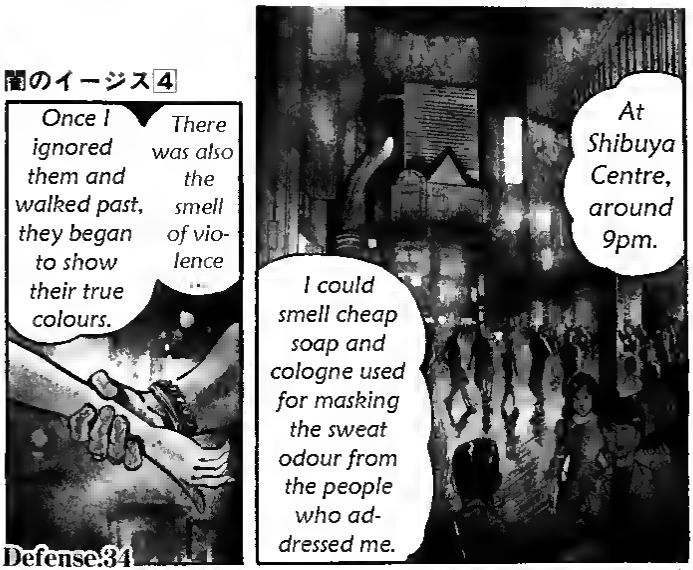
Tanabe ... don't become like me ...


I... couldn't cry, even when my daughter died... I thought if I got hired by the "clan" and pursued you, maybe I'd be able to cry...
But, what I found was my true character... it was another terrifying face...

It's in my pants pocket.
Please take this whistle ...
Perhaps my life was something like theirs...
It's a dog whistle, only audible to dogs, not people...

For the first time in my life...
I he-ard it.
It's a lonely... very sad sound...




At Shibuya Centre, around 9pm.
I could smell cheap soap and cologne used for masking the sweat odour from the people who addressed me.
There was also the smell of violence ...
Once I ignored them and walked past, they began to show their true colours.
Defense.34

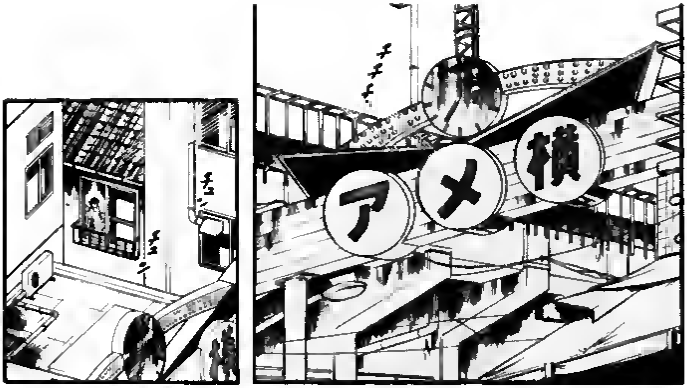
闇の刃I
Blade In The Dark I
So ...
that's their usual method.
Using tranquilizers to put the victims to sleep before proceeding with the dirty deeds...

Defense.34
闇の刃 I
Blade In The Dark 1

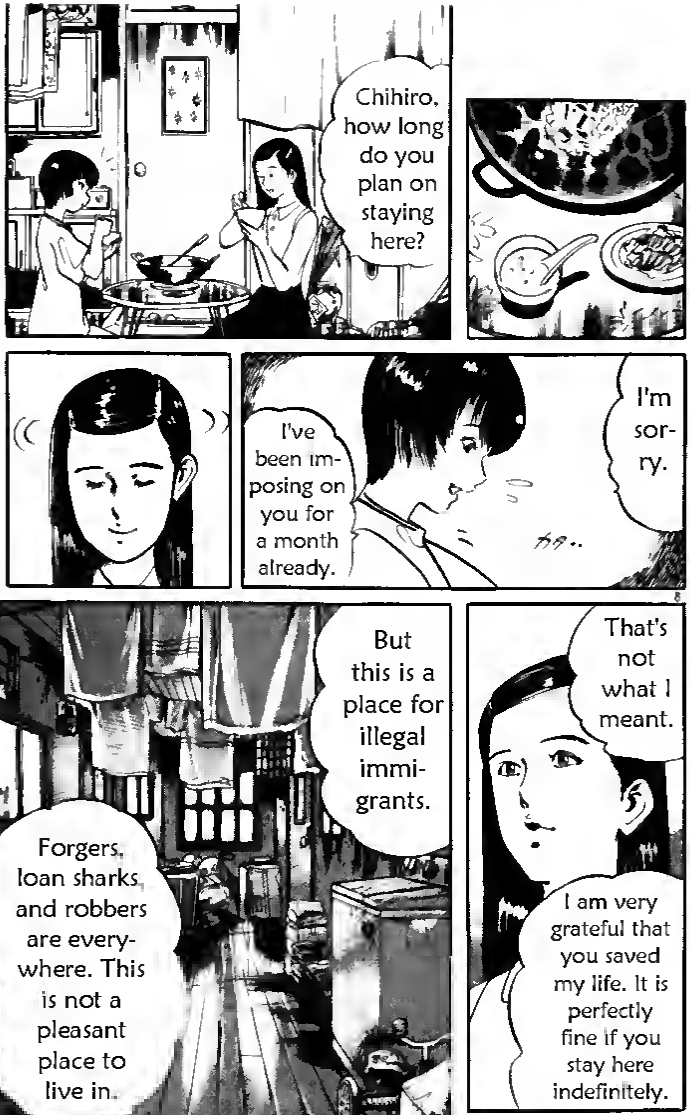
he was actually reaching for a hidden weapon.
The leader tried to apologize, but...
The old man who trained me had only one answer for this.
How do you deal with someone who never gives up?

"Kill."

"Kill!"
"Kill!"




TL "hello" in Mandarin

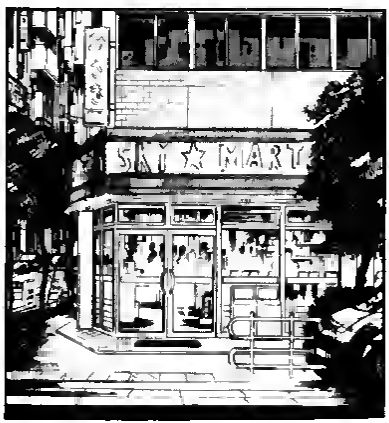

Chihiro, how long do you plan on staying here?
I've been imposing on you for a month already.
I'm sorry.
ガタ..
That's not what I meant.
I am very grateful that you saved my life. It is perfectly fine if you stay here indefinitely.
But this is a place for illegal immigrants.
Forgers, loan sharks, and robbers are everywhere. This is not a pleasant place to live in.

I know there must be a reason that you have to stay here.
But everyone in your family is going to be worried if you stay for too long.
I don't have a family.
The parents that raised me are now divorced.
No sib-lings?
I do have a youn-ger sister.
But I tried to kill her.
Isn't there anyone who could help you?

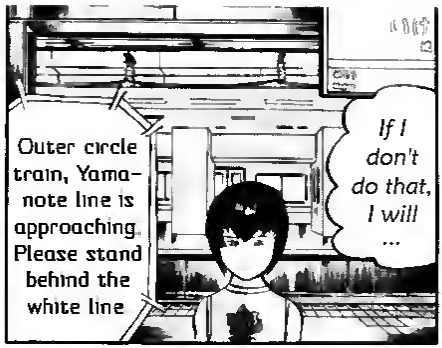
However, his hands were tied because he had to help my sister.
We probably won't meet again.

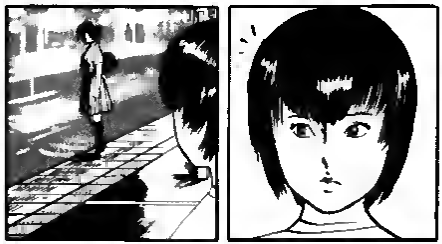
There is one.
Someone who should be able to help me.

Welcome.

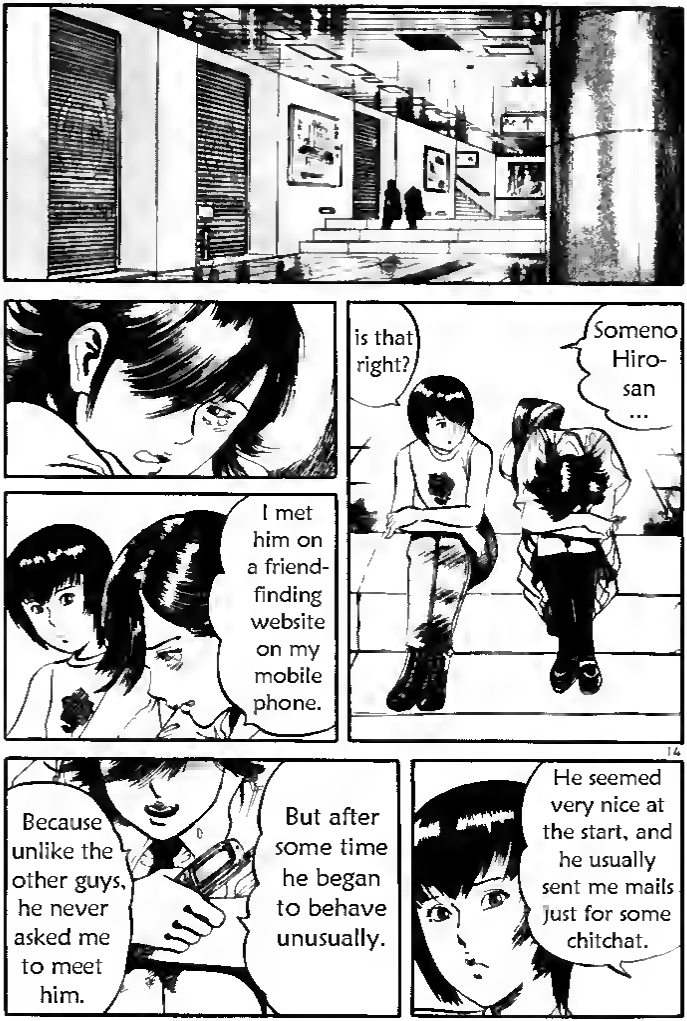

SK☆MART

Here's your change, 256 yen. Thank you very much.
I should have forgotten about it. I shouldn't have recalled it.
The night before, something long forgotten was woken up.
Should I heat it up for you?
The skills that I had, the skills I received from "Angel".
"Kill!" "Kill!"
Welcome! Should I heat the bento up for you?
Just keep yourself busy with your daily life and forget about the things that provoke the inner you.


Outer circle train, Yamanote line is approaching. Please stand behind the white line
If I don't do that, I will ...

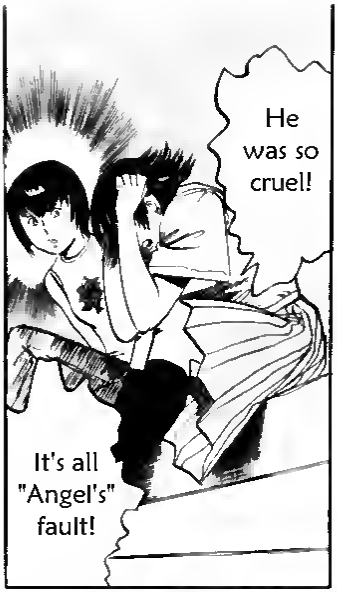


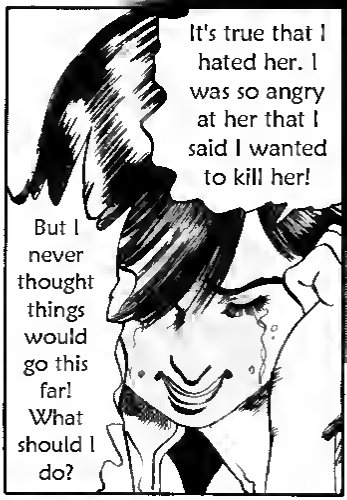
You'd better not.
13


Someno Hiro-san ...
is that right?
I met him on a friend-finding website on my mobile phone.
He seemed very nice at the start, and he usually sent me mails just for some chitchat.
But after some time he began to behave unusually.
Because unlike the other guys, he never asked me to meet him.

Until one day, he sent a message.
If I could kill three people for you, who would they be?
Don't you want to kill someone?
And this is what he sent back a few days ago.
15
The proof of our friendship is at Omotesando station.
I thought it was some kind of joke, like I saw on TV.
A person who bullied me in junior high school; another person I hated in grade 10; and my mom.
I sent their names back to him.

Do you remember your close friend in junior high school, Kiyone-san?
I heard she passed away today
Kiyone? We weren't actually close, but what about her?
She fell onto the track and got run over by the train.
They said she was pushed by someone at the Omotesando station.


He was so cruel!
It's all "Angel's" fault!


It's true that I hated her. I was so angry at her that I said I wanted to kill her!
But I never thought things would go this far! What should I do?

ピロロロロ
プッ

What did you just say?
"Angel"?

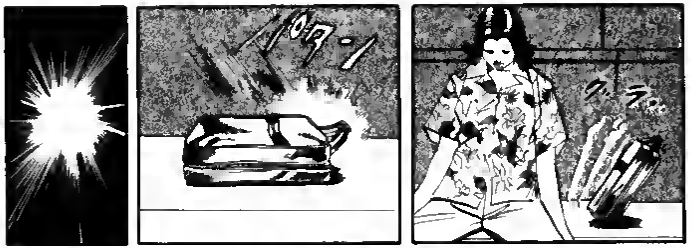
It's the second notice.
It's ... him again ...

ピ!

July 19
Ebitsu Square
Everything is
for you.
From "Angel"
I could
hear my
heart
pounding.
July 19
at
Ebitsu
Square

I just spent half a day wandering around, to no avail.
Wh-ew.
If I really get to meet "Angel", what should I do?

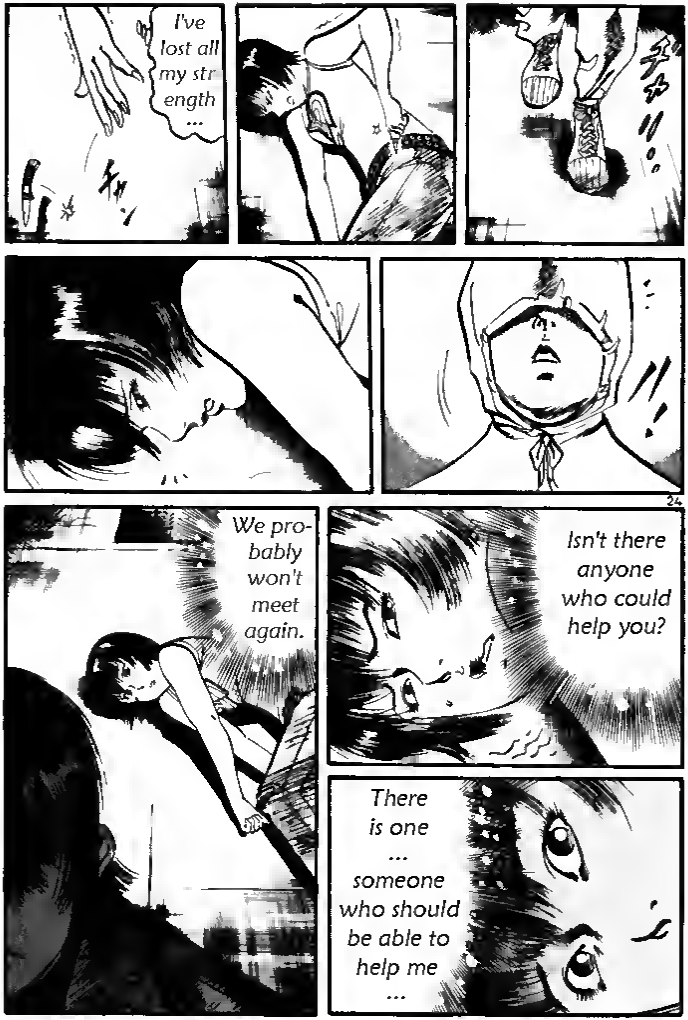
ス!
…?
20
That guy …
"An-gel"!
He's dead.


ハロー!
ウーン…

キミの…
オオ
オ

22
No way ...
What is this?

ゴッ
ハッ!?
す!
23
I was so careless. That's what I thought.
ド!
Ah ...


I've lost all my str ength ...
24
We probably won't meet again.
Isn't there anyone who could help you?
There is one ... someone who should be able to help me ...

Don't move.
You were hit on the head.
25
13

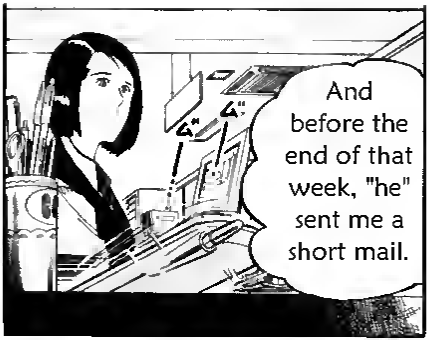
# Defense.35
# 闇の刃 Ⅱ
## ——Blade In The Dark 2——

2

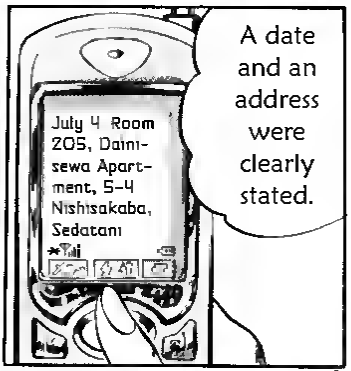
SIREN
Two days ago, Shinjuku area, 6:30 PM
That person is the fang that I have to deal with.
What is so important, but gets more valuable each time it is broken?
Are you Shimada Sumiko-san?
Please answer my riddle.
3
Two months ago, I met this person through a friend-finding website on my mobile.
Is the answer... a record?

After several conversations I found myself telling him things that I wouldn't tell other people.
He was a well-spoken man. He was genuinely interested in the things I said and never hurried or pressured me.
Until there was this mail...
The first person was Nakata Shizuko, my colleague. We didn't get along very well.
The second person was Hayashi Kouji, my boss from a previous job. He followed me around like a psycho.
If I'd kill three people that you hate, who would you choose?
I thought he was joking.

ピ!

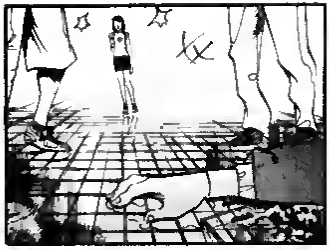

And before the end of that week, "he" sent me a short mail.

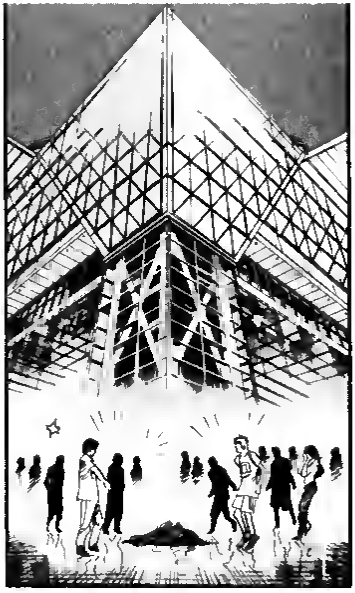
It never crossed my mind that the day after her vacation, Nakata Shizuko would be found dead in her own apartment.


July 4 Room 205, Daini-sewa Apartment, 5-4 Nishisakaba, Sedatani
A date and an address were clearly stated.

I wanted to clear my doubt. No, I was there to clear my worries.
I went there on the specified date.

Two weeks after that, I received another mail.
This time a date and the name of a famous exhibition hall were sent.

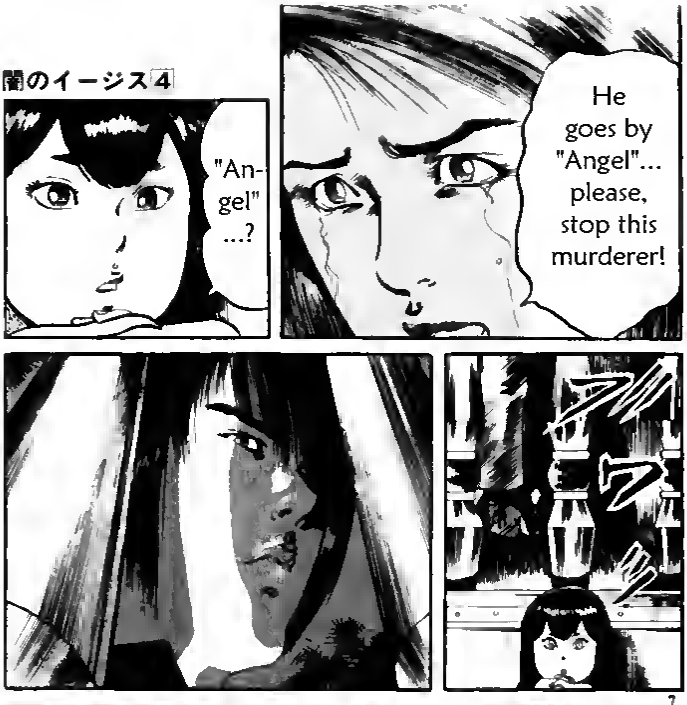




Please, please help him!

But then it turned out to be like this!
I didn't really want him to die...

We were having a fight, so...
The third person I named... was Hata-no Yoshio, my lover.


"An-gel" ...?
He goes by "Angel"... please, stop this murderer!
7
The next day, Mekuro District

You're not "him".
Who are you?
A "protector" hired by her to protect her lover.

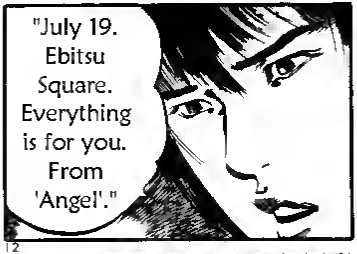
Didn't she say she wanted him killed?
Didn't she say she hated him?
Is that so...? That means she lied to me.

What ?!
He fled? This isn't like you at all, is it?
He jumped down from the fourth floor.
You're kid-ding me

But with proper training, it's possible to choose a safe landing spot and get away unharmed.
From the height of four storeys, a parachute won't save you.
He dropped his cell phone. It's cracked, but still functional.
Hurry, Karito! Check the messages!

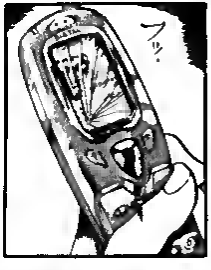
These are all forewarnings, but there's one with the date and place clearly stated.

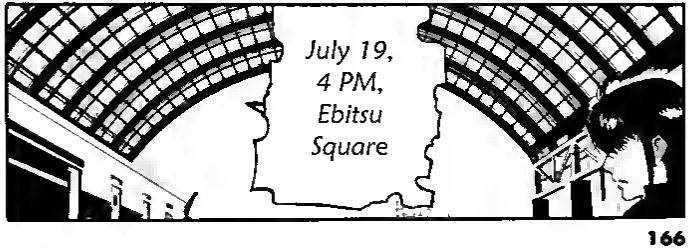
There are at least ten other people that he has been sending similar messages to.
And he's targeting four of those people.


"July 19. Ebitsu Square. Everything is for you. From 'Angel'."

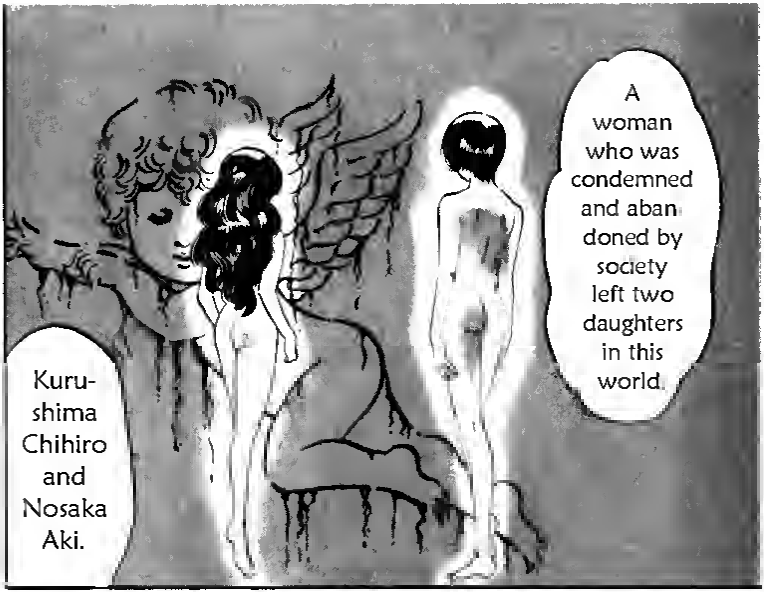
12

at Ebitsu Square.
He is going to kill his next victim tomorrow ...

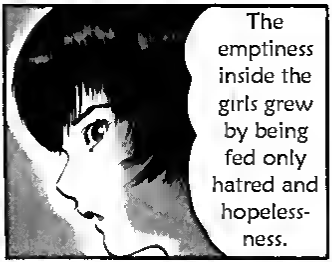

フッ


July 19, 4 PM, Ebitsu Square

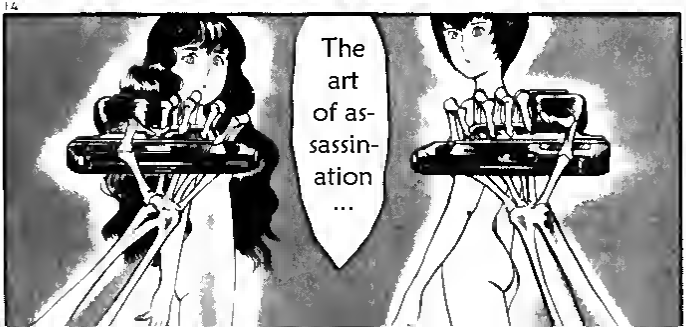
DUTUTU...
When you heard the name "Angel", your facial expression suddenly changed.
Karito, I noticed.
An-na ...
About Kurushima Chihiro, the girl you met at Seihou Academy.
You're still blaming yourself, aren't you?


A woman who was condemned and abandoned by society left two daughters in this world.
Kurushima Chihiro and Nosaka Aki.

"Angel" gave the most dreadful thing to them.


The emptiness inside the girls grew by being fed only hatred and hopelessness.



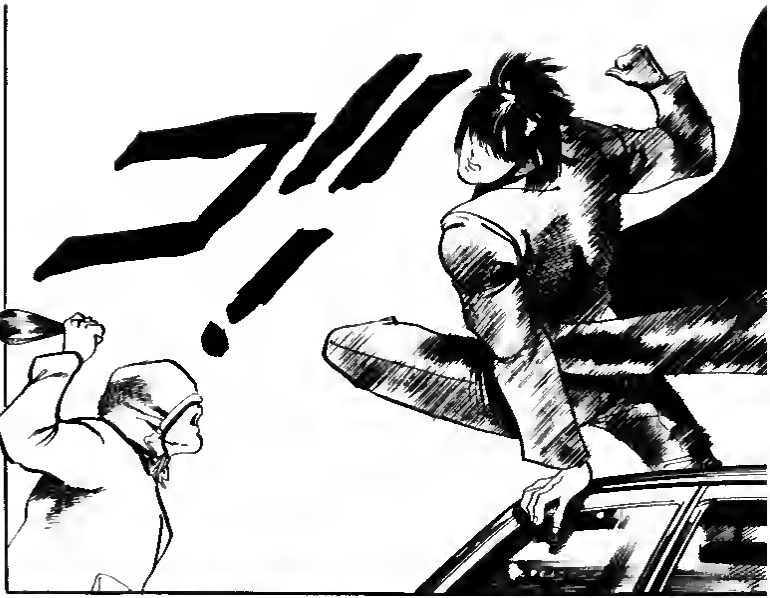

The art of assassination ...

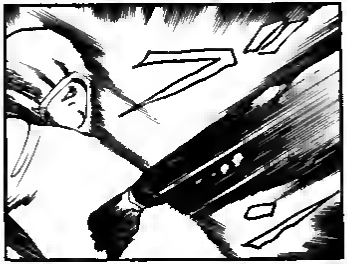
The other resisted it.
One submitted to the emptiness in her heart.
And a tragedy occurred.
15
Has it ever crossed your mind that if I'd tried a little harder, I might have been able to save that girl?
Anna ...
Listen ...
Karito ...

I'll get back to you!

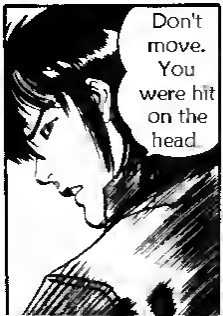
……

Kuru-shima Chi-hiro ?!
What is she doing here?
That is...
17
.....


フッ!!


フ

You ...
Why are you here?


Don't move. You were hit on the head.

They all asked me for this, that's why I kill people for them.
Why do you have to interfere?
すう!
Then why do you have to interfere with me?!
スッ
Answer me.
Are you "Angel"?
ボ!

Chi-
hiro
...?!

# Defense.36
# 闇の刃Ⅲ
## ——Blade In The Dark 3——

Why ?!
Chi-hi-ro ...!

I...
Tate ...
グッグッグ
sen-sei ...?
!!!
Chi-hi-ro?!
ズズ
Chi-hiro ...?
ダッ!

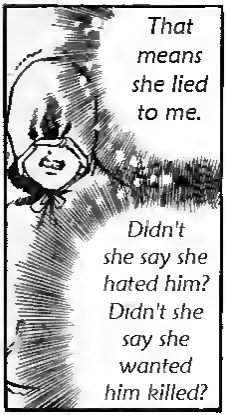
ファサッ
ファサッ
ファサッ
Aki ...?
Sis, I did it.
I killed that person.

You do realize how miserable Mom's life was before she died, right? Now I've avenged her
Why are you making that face?
Why do you have to kill me?
Sis ...?

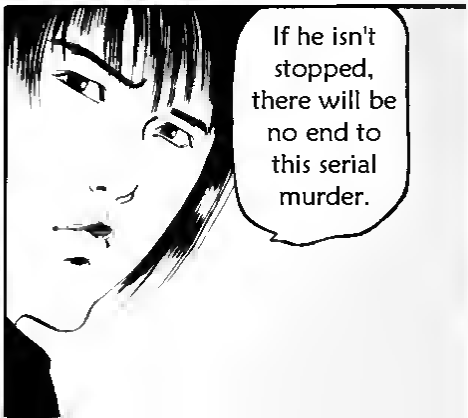
Noo
ooo
...!!
Chihiro, calm down. There's nothing for you to fear here.

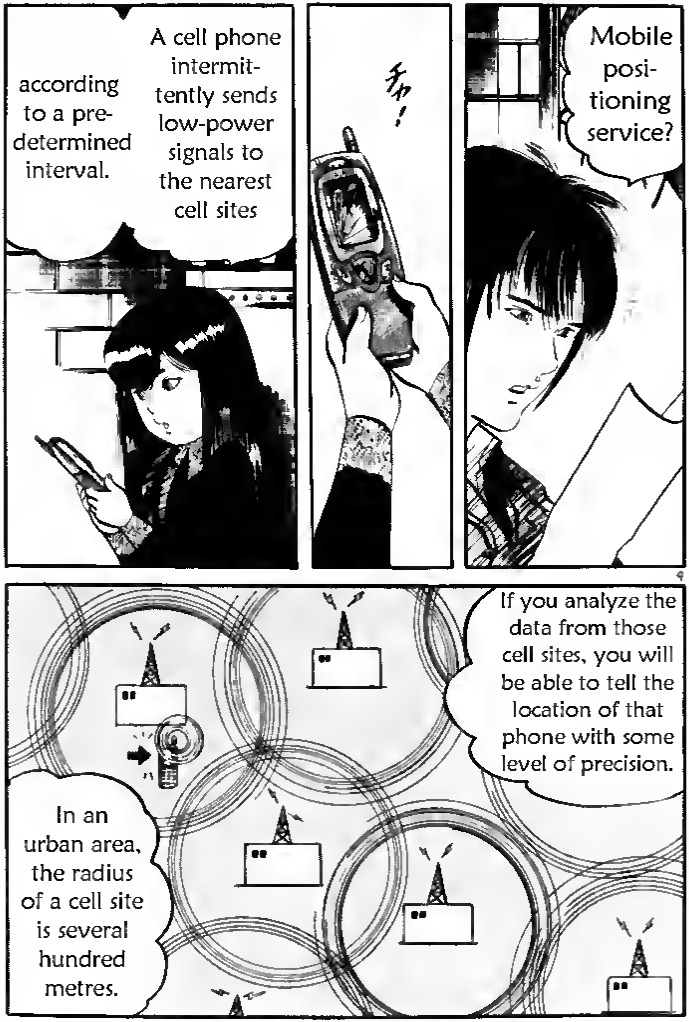
I killed ... killed Aki...!
Listen, your little sister is alive.
The news must have come out by now; Nosaka Aki was delivered to a hospital and has been saved.
She's currently under rehabilitation in an asylum.
7
Tate ... sensei.
Thank ... you ...
for saving Aki back then.

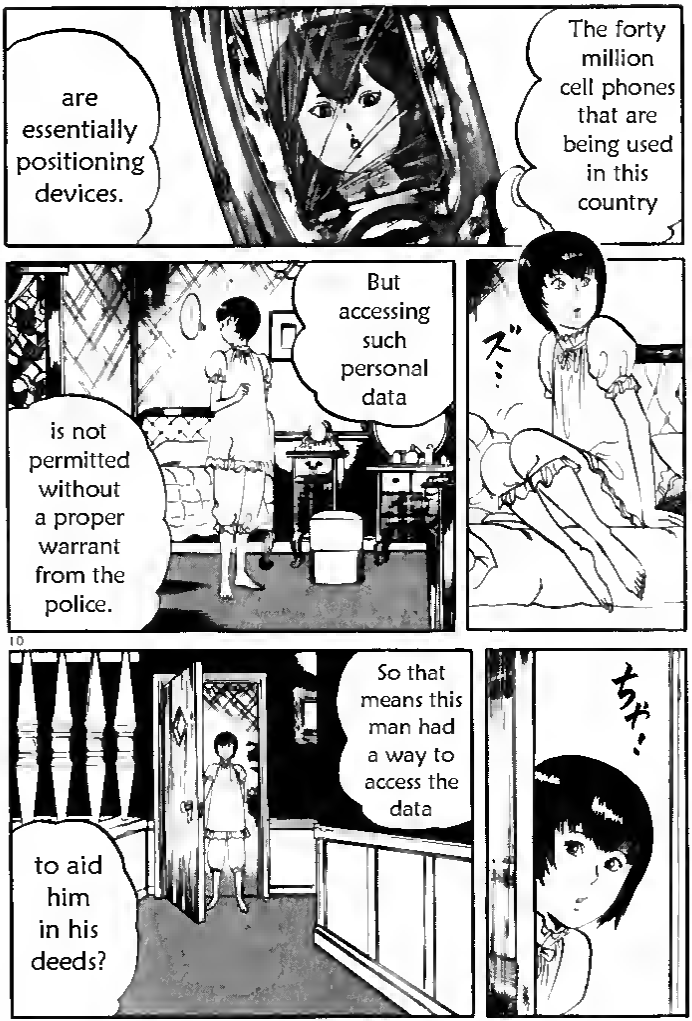
A psy-cho-pathic killer.
If it's for a mail friend, he could kill any-one.

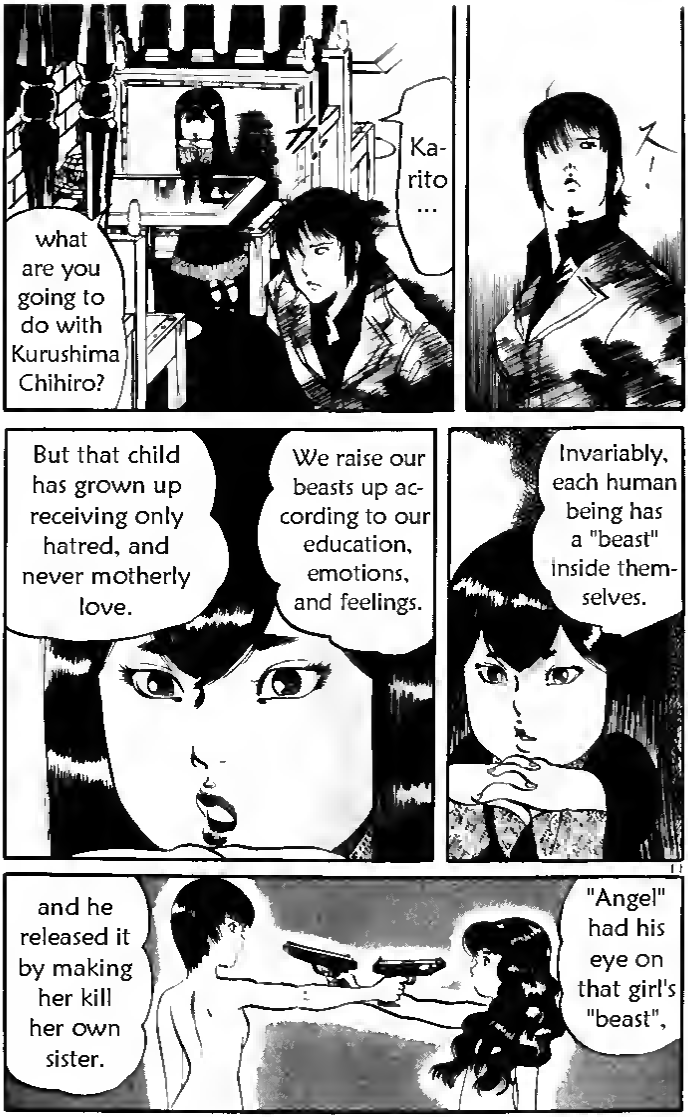

That means she lied to me.
Didn't she say she hated him? Didn't she say she wanted him killed?

That man wasn't the "Angel" we know.


If he isn't stopped, there will be no end to this serial murder.

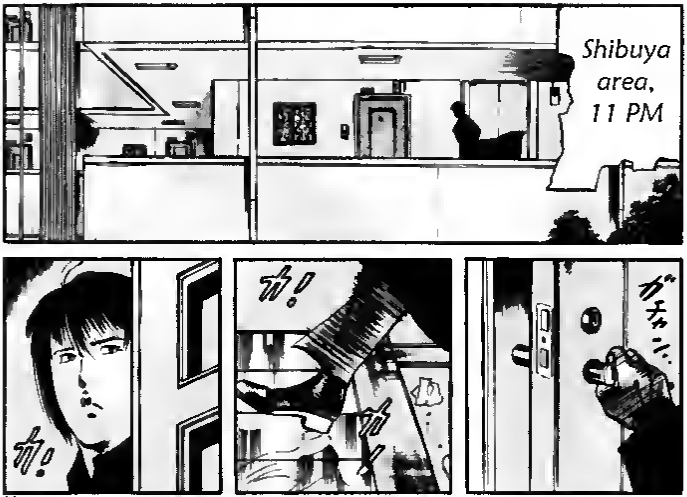

A cell phone intermittently sends low-power signals to the nearest cell sites
according to a predetermined interval.
チャ！
Mobile positioning service?
If you analyze the data from those cell sites, you will be able to tell the location of that phone with some level of precision.
In an urban area, the radius of a cell site is several hundred metres.


The forty million cell phones that are being used in this country
are essentially positioning devices.
But accessing such personal data
is not permitted without a proper warrant from the police.
ズ…
10
So that means this man had a way to access the data
to aid him in his deeds?
ちゃ!


what are you going to do with Kurushima Chihiro?
Ka-rito ...
ス!
But that child has grown up receiving only hatred, and never motherly love.
We raise our beasts up according to our education, emotions, and feelings.
Invariably, each human being has a "beast" inside themselves.
and he released it by making her kill her own sister.
"Angel" had his eye on that girl's "beast",

The "beast" inside her is so dangerous we cannot stop it.
That girl almost accidentally killed you!
12
You're too kind, and you overburden yourself.
That's who you are.
I know what kind of person you are.

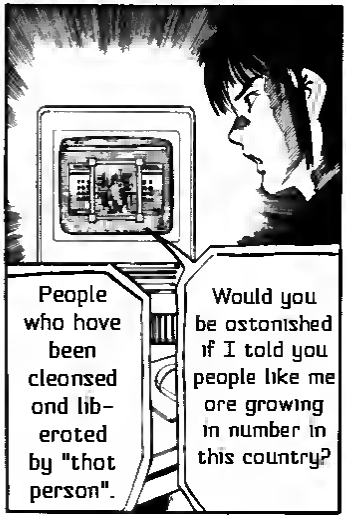
The only thing I can do
is "protecting".
One day you may have to go through a tragedy like the one five years ago....

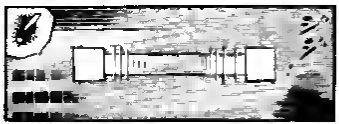

Shibuya area, 11 PM
ガチャ…

He left for N&T Higashi Nippon last year in July.
He worked on the dual system and exclusive servers for cell phone mail and resigned this February.
Nitta Kyouhei, 32 years old.
He was in the technical development department of Tokyo Mail Communication.

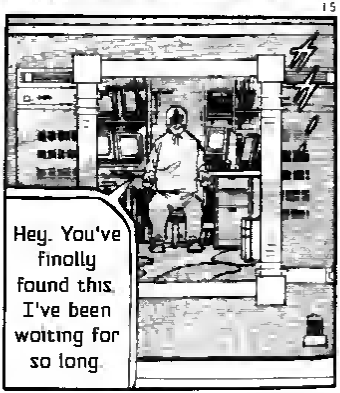
カチ!
カチ!
The reason for his resignation was the exposure of his psychotic behaviour toward his colleagues.

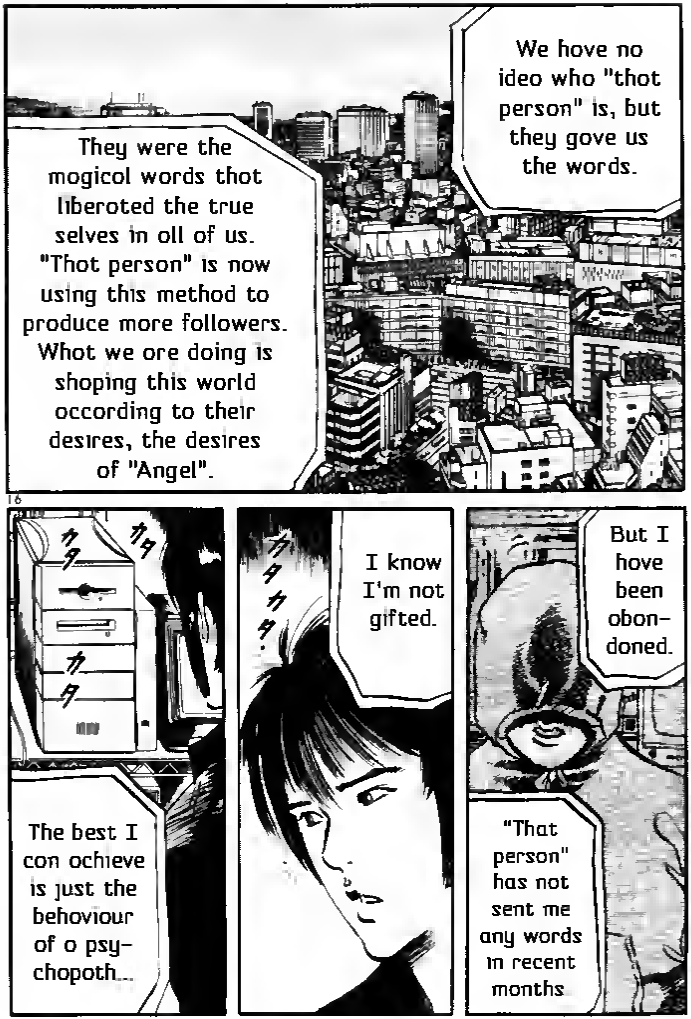
He hacked into the server of the cell phone service provider to check on the data of the cell sites.
Found it.

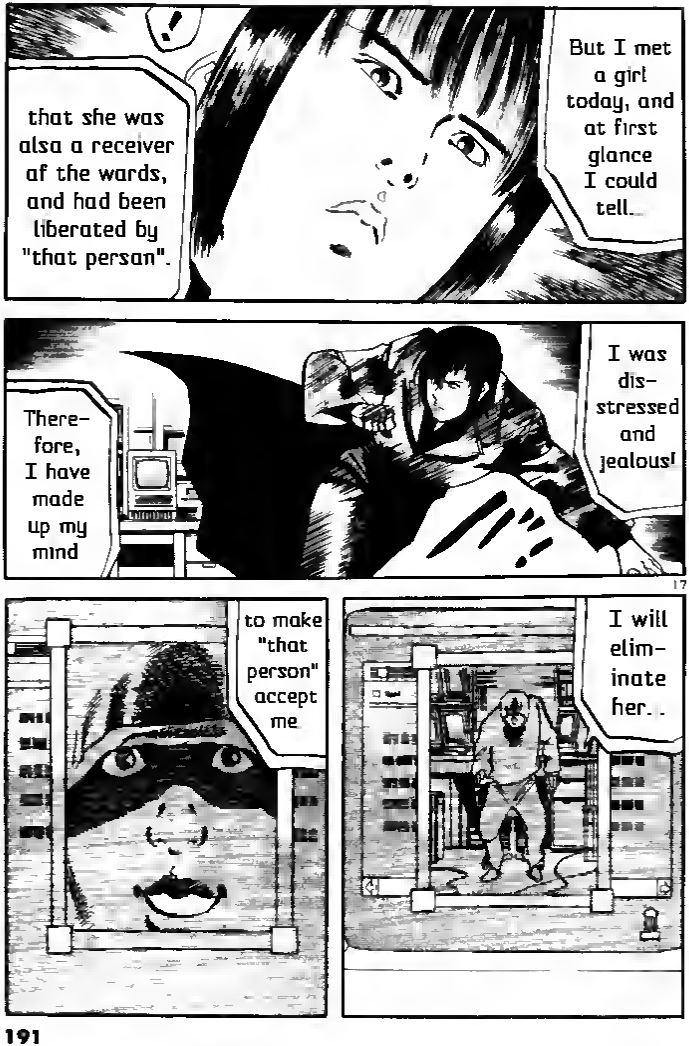

People who have been cleansed and liberated by "that person".
Would you be astonished if I told you people like me are growing in number in this country?



15


Hey. You've finally found this. I've been waiting for so long.

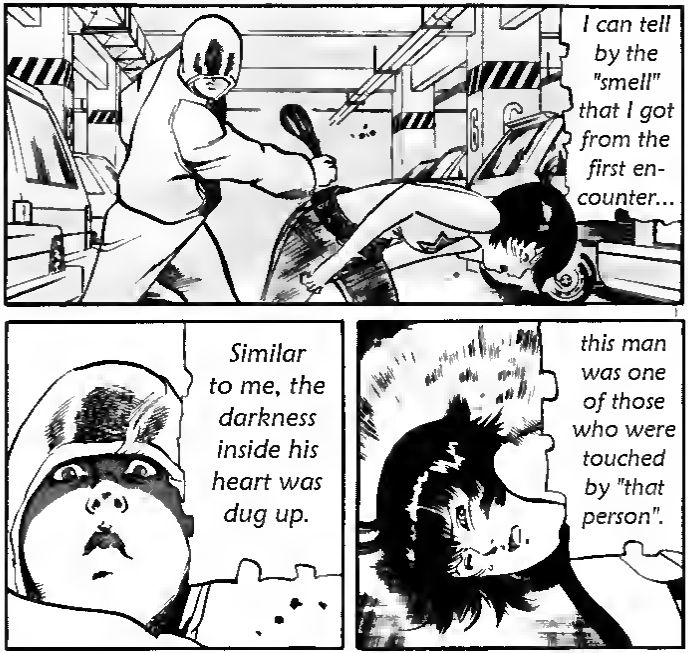

We have no idea who "that person" is, but they gave us the words.
They were the magical words that liberated the true selves in all of us. "That person" is now using this method to produce more followers. What we are doing is shaping this world according to their desires, the desires of "Angel".
16
カタカタ
I know I'm not gifted.
The best I can achieve is just the behaviour of a psychopath...
But I have been abandoned.
"That person" has not sent me any words in recent months


!
that she was also a receiver of the wards, and had been liberated by "that person".
But I met a girl today, and at first glance I could tell...
Therefore, I have made up my mind
I was distressed and jealous!
17
to make "that person" accept me.
I will eliminate her...

He must have the same set-up somewhere else.
And he still plans to carry out similar murders!
Anna, I found his target. It's Chihiro!
Don't take your eyes off of her!
Karito.. I'm sorry. She has disappeared.

The cell phone?! Does that mean...?
She must have heard our conversation.
More importantly, the cell phone that you acquired also went missing.
Because of that, he could still trace the phone.
The screen was cracked but it was still functioning.
Chihiro...!
Is she planning to face him by herself?!

アメ横
ガヤガヤ
ザワ
ザワ


I can tell by the "smell" that I got from the first encounter...
Similar to me, the darkness inside his heart was dug up.
this man was one of those who were touched by "that person".
Therefore, I know that he will follow me.

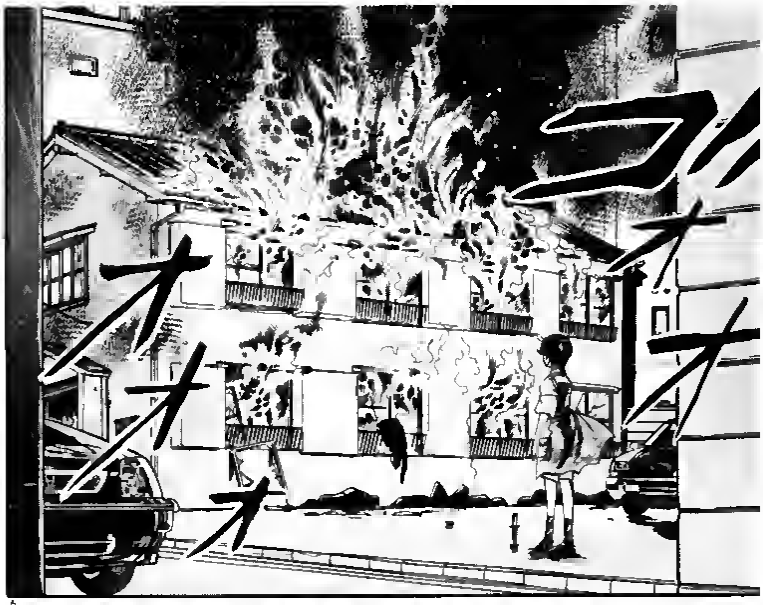
Defense.37
闇の刃-Ⅳ
—Blade In The Dark 4—

He wanted to kill me.
Defense.37
闇の刃Ⅳ
—Blade In The Dark 4—

I can't give you any more troubles ...
Tate-sensei, I'm sorry.
ﾋﾞｸ!
ppp!
So the secret on how I got the information of my mail friends is out.
NTT ISDN
You're waiting for me, aren't you, Chihiro?

that girl, Someno Hiro!
But you're underestimating me.
Right when you showed up at Ebitsu Square, I knew exactly who told you about me...
What did you do to her?
I punished her, of course.
Despite me killing people for her, she betrayed me.
And she even got you involved.

It's from the foreigners' apartment at Okaji City, isn't it?
I just cut the tendons of her hands and feet.
Oh, and I also got the contact number that you gave her.


ゴオオオオ

ジャリ…
オオオオ
A...
ah...
ガシ!!
Why
?!

Don't you think it's unfair? We were both contemplated by "that person"!
ゴロ
ゴオオオオ
I was abandoned, while you received the love from "that person".
Xiao ... Ying-san ...?
ボロ
ボロ

You're a sucker for this kind of thing, aren't you!
SFX
laughter

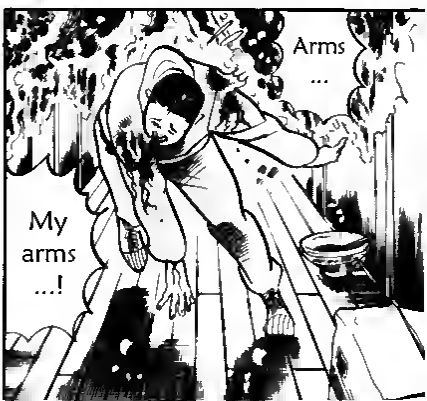
I am ... you.
Who ... are you?
ガ
ゴオオオオ

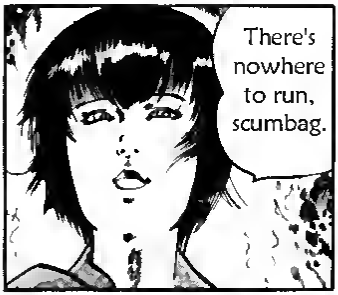
.....!
Who ...
are you ...?
You called me out, didn't you?

ギャあああ
ひぃ

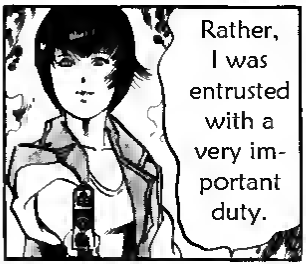
キャアアア!!

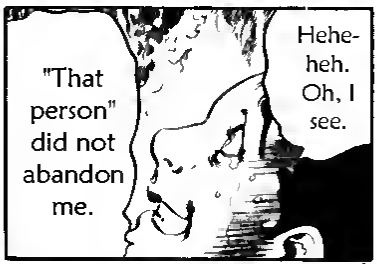
You wanted to see me, didn't you?
Hahaha! Why are you running?

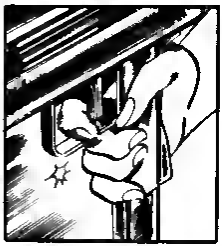

Arms ...
My arms ...!

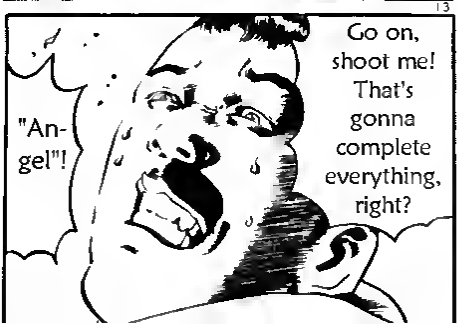

There's nowhere to run, scumbag.

ゴオオオオ
ギシ

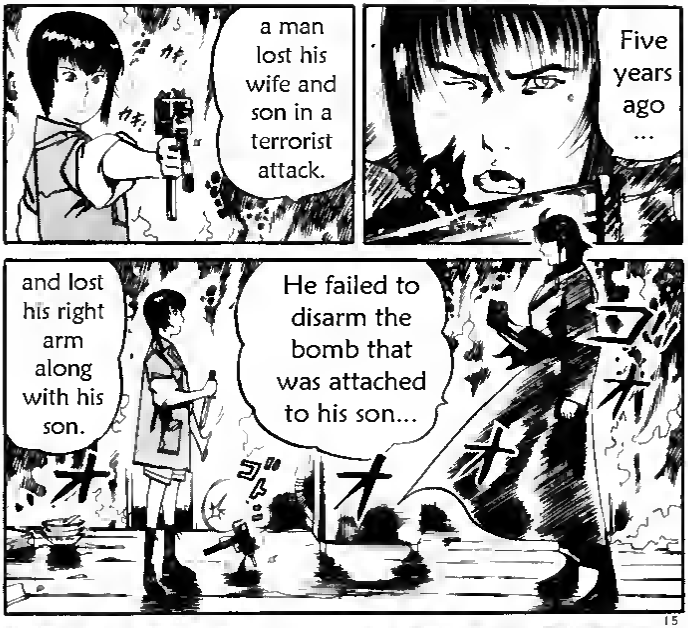

Rather, I was entrusted with a very important duty.


"That person" did not abandon me.
Hehe-heh. Oh, I see.




"Angel"!
Go on, shoot me! That's gonna complete everything, right?

Don't kill him, Chi-hiro!


a man lost his wife and son in a terrorist attack.
Five years ago ...
and lost his right arm along with his son.
He failed to disarm the bomb that was attached to his son...
has had a soul within it.
Since then, that man's right arm ...

And every time he sees fire, the pain he felt when his arm was ripped off returns as the "phantom pain"...
The touch of his son's hand was imprinted in him and became the "phantom limb".
would immediately catch the scent of a beast called "revenge".
Then, his heart ...
16
Hu hu hu.
But it's still not too late for you to fix it!
You and I, we're the same. The unchained "beasts" are tilting our consciences off-balance.

Do you really believe that showing me your scars
would make me cry?

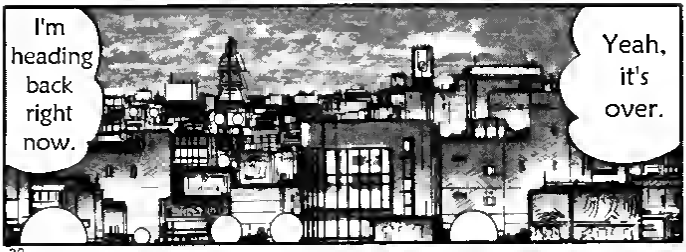
ガッ

17

For me, for this girl, what can you do?!
What can you do?!

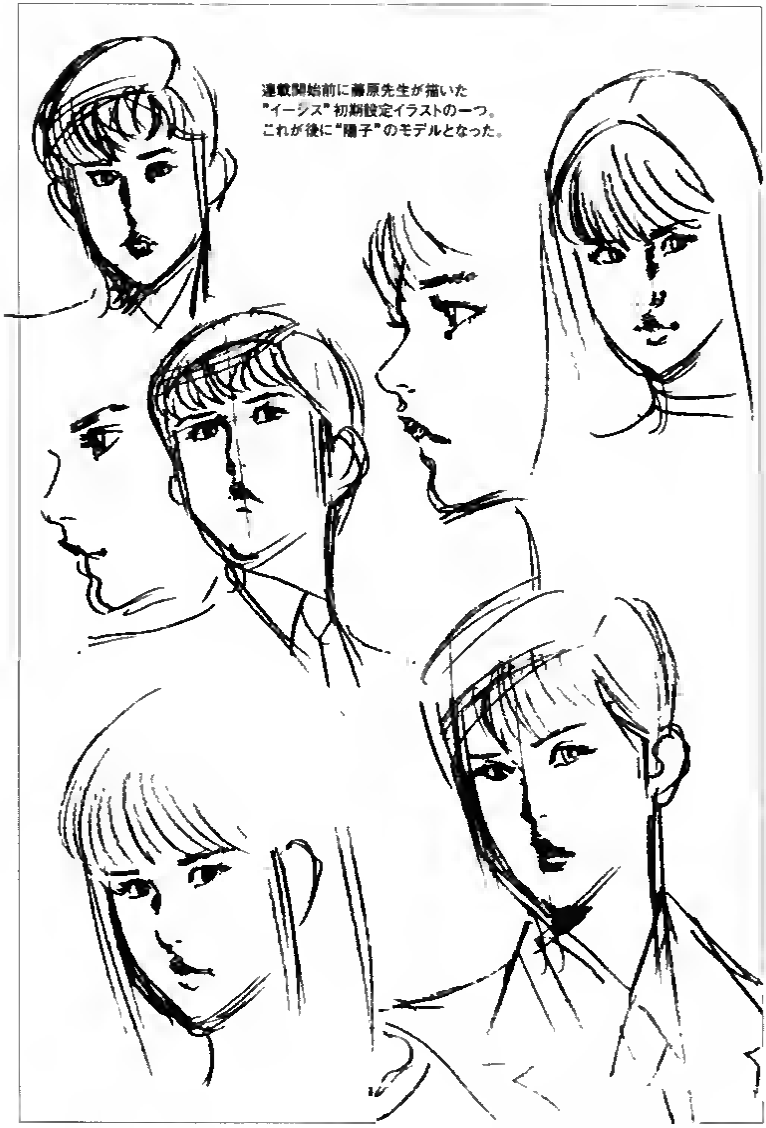
I am a "protector."
I will protect you.
ゴオオオ…
Hire me.
ボロ
ブバ

ゴトン
Hu hu hu.
Ha ha ha ha!
It's useless! You can't run away from "that person"!



■週刊ヤングサンデー平成13年25号から平成13年34号に掲載

——闇のイージス4・完——


連載開始前に藤原先生が描いた
"イージス"初期設定イラストの一つ。
これが後に"陽子"のモデルとなった。

# Afterword

## "The Policewoman Named Morito Youko"

Morito Youko, a policewoman of the Community Safety Division of South Shinjuku Station, 27 years old, long and slim face, small nose, shoulder-length hair, sharp eyes showing strong determination, strong-headed, lack of female tenderness, an ex-gangster, difficult to get along with, not a violent person but a truly troublemaking cop. Her prototype originated during the preparation phase of a project that was cancelled so many times and was the prototype of Yami no Aegis.

I have always wanted to write about a character that's an iron lady. Iron lady, for me, doesn't mean sturdy body, but strong and unyielding mind that would rather break than bend. "In Japan, the women will have a very difficult time if they aren't stronger than men," my friend told me. Therefore, her image pops up in my mind every time I think about the iron ladies. My first editor liked her as much as Zero, so much that he said "Let's pull pranks on Morito-san." And my current editor also said, "What if we have Youko-san enter an introduction ceremony? That's going to be fun, hahaha." It seems like everyone loves to pull pranks on this kind of person, so she would probably keep getting bullied.

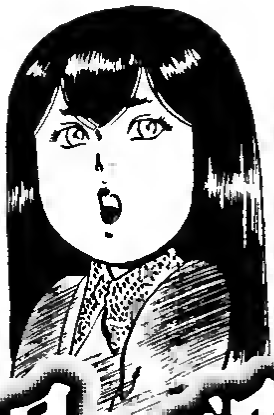
Nanatsuki Kyouichi

This summer, there was an incident in a nearby neighborhood. A policeman was killed in action when he tried to stop a man who had a huge knife. The policeman made four shots to threaten the criminal. The man would not drop the knife but instead stabbed the policeman in the chest. The policeman shot the criminal to death before dying himself. For me, this case was as frightening as 9/11.

In the recent years, many police scandals have been exposed, be they bribery, charging the innocent, or criminal police. Even an organization that was created by an admirable idea would eventually become like a body of water where sediments are present at the bottom when it grows up in size and get forced to fill its tummy. I believe that the people who are most sorrowful because of this must be the front-line policemen, since many policemen that I know truly believe that it's the honour and dignity of the police to protect the well-being of the civilians. In "Yami no Aegis", there have been chapters where the police were the culprits themselves, and that is not going away soon, since that is closely related to the ex-policeman Tate Karito and the policewoman Morito Youko.

I want to believe that in the increasingly chaotic world that's entering the 21st century, there is still an idealistic "protector" like Morito Youko out there somewhere. I would like to sincerely extend my commemoration to the deceased policeman, because he was also an idealistic "protector".

2001年9月30日 BAR「屋の巣」のカウンターにて
http://www02.so-net.ne.jp/~july-m/



# 闇のイージス

AEGIS IN THE DARK